KNAVE

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CHRISTMAS
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164 PAGES OF FESTIVE FROLICS!

CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

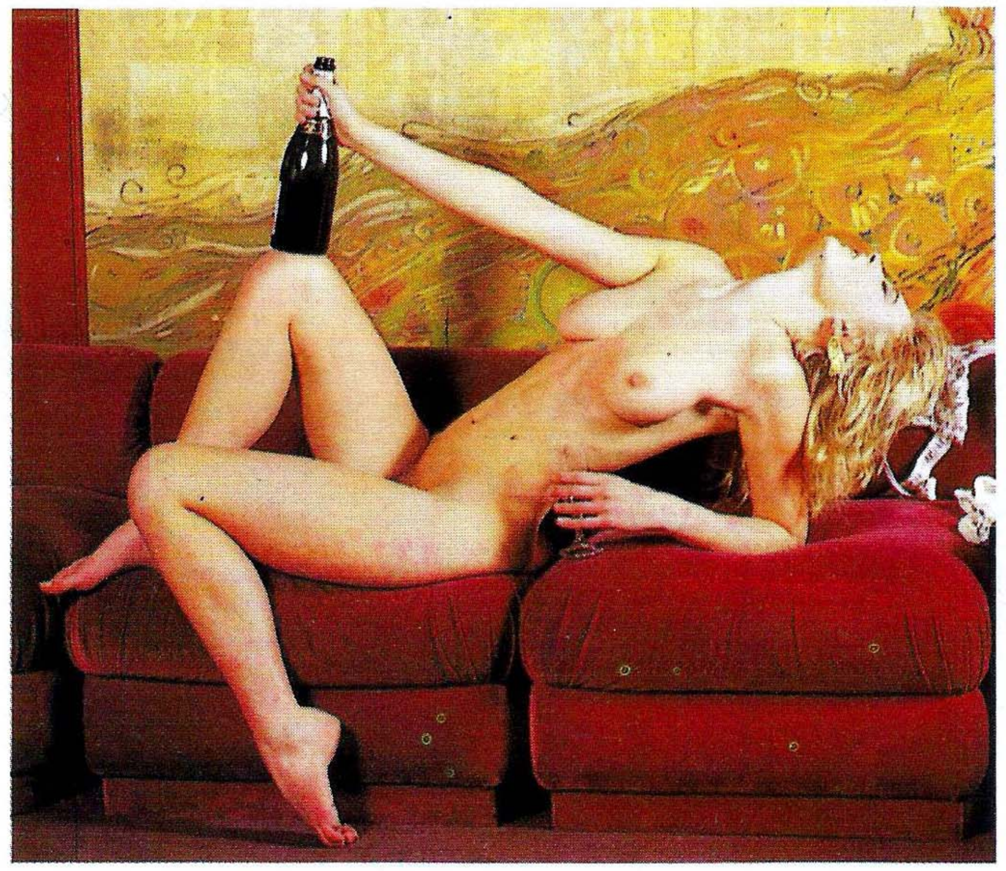
Girl CHAT

This is the bit where we take ourselves even less seriously than in the rest of the magazine. As well as looking at a sample of every girl in the issue (and using the 'caught off guard' shots where available) our man propping up the bar at the Grievous Bodily Arms, W.F. Guttersnipe, delves into the drivelling depths of the so-called 'girlie blurbs' and tells the sordid truth about the thirty-strong team of addle-brained hierophants who stand in for an infinite number of monkeys and write them. From the Senior Arch-blurb Director to the Boy On a Youth Training Scheme Who Fills In When the Assistant Vice-deputy Blurb Researcher Is Having An Acne Attack, from El Gutto the obese Editor to El Blotto his tosspot assistant – all are libelled in equal and fearless measure. Then we have the section where W.F.G. takes an irreverent look at the sillier stories sent to us from local newspapers around the country and the national press. Don't forget – you can earn yourself £20 by sending us a funny newspaper cutting which we can use in this column. (Send your crazy cuttings to W.F. Guttersnipe, Knave, PO Box 312, Witham, Essex CM8 3SZ.) Read on . . . !

MONKEY BUSINESS

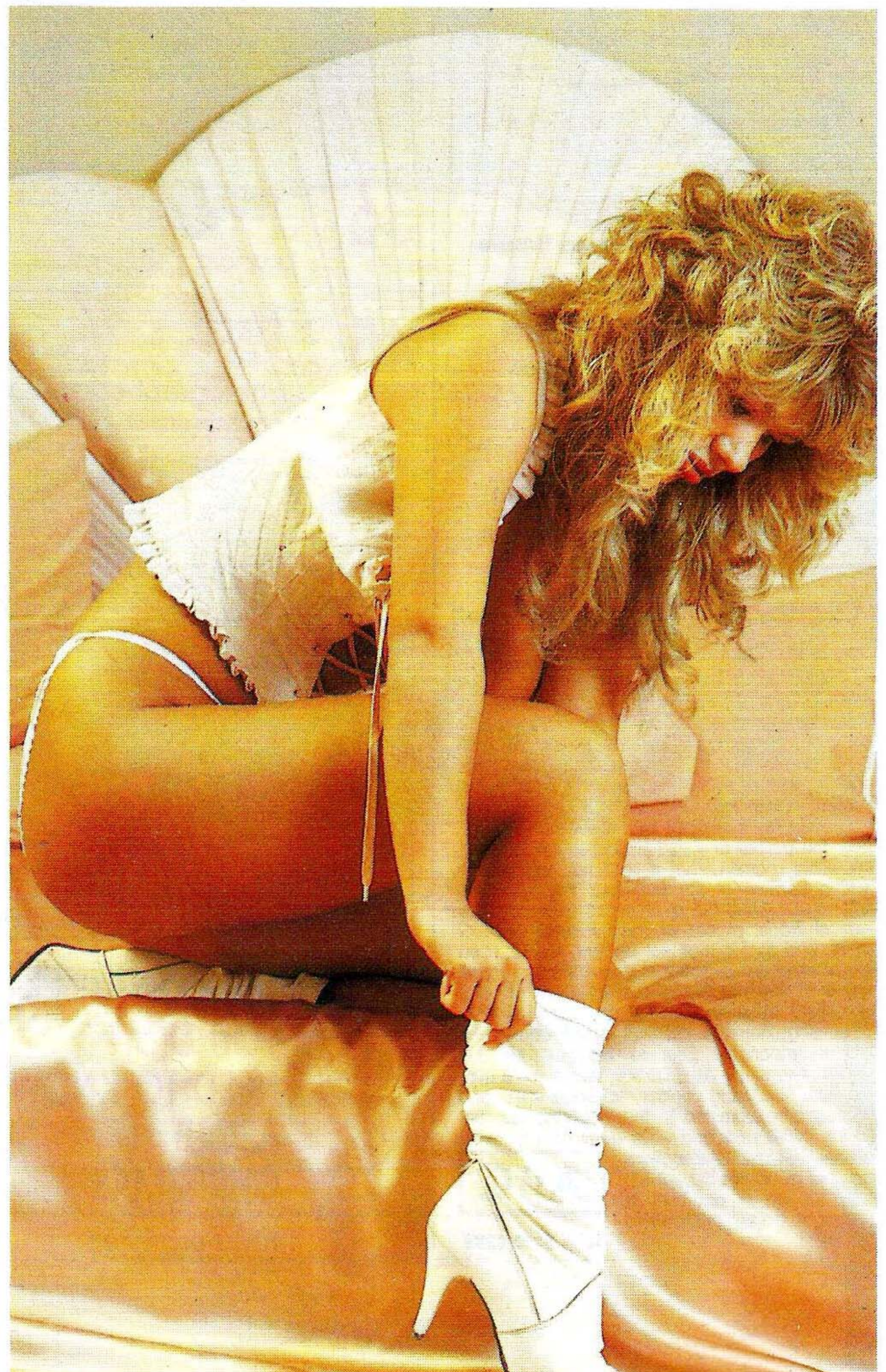
Rochelle, says the demented dwarf on blurb-duty, "wanted to go into catering but failed her *courses* miserably..." Could it be that, for the first time, the stupified scribe has actually made a funny on purpose? On second thoughts, it's highly unlikely. Rochelle is yet another victim of our Scrooge-like Company Accountant's economy drive – "£3.50 per set and bring me change!" he bellowed at the band of failed monkeys who double as set constructors. Apparently, they set to work and, after a banana sandwich and plenty of coconut milk, came up with this horror, which shows all the creative acumen of a rotting cabbage.

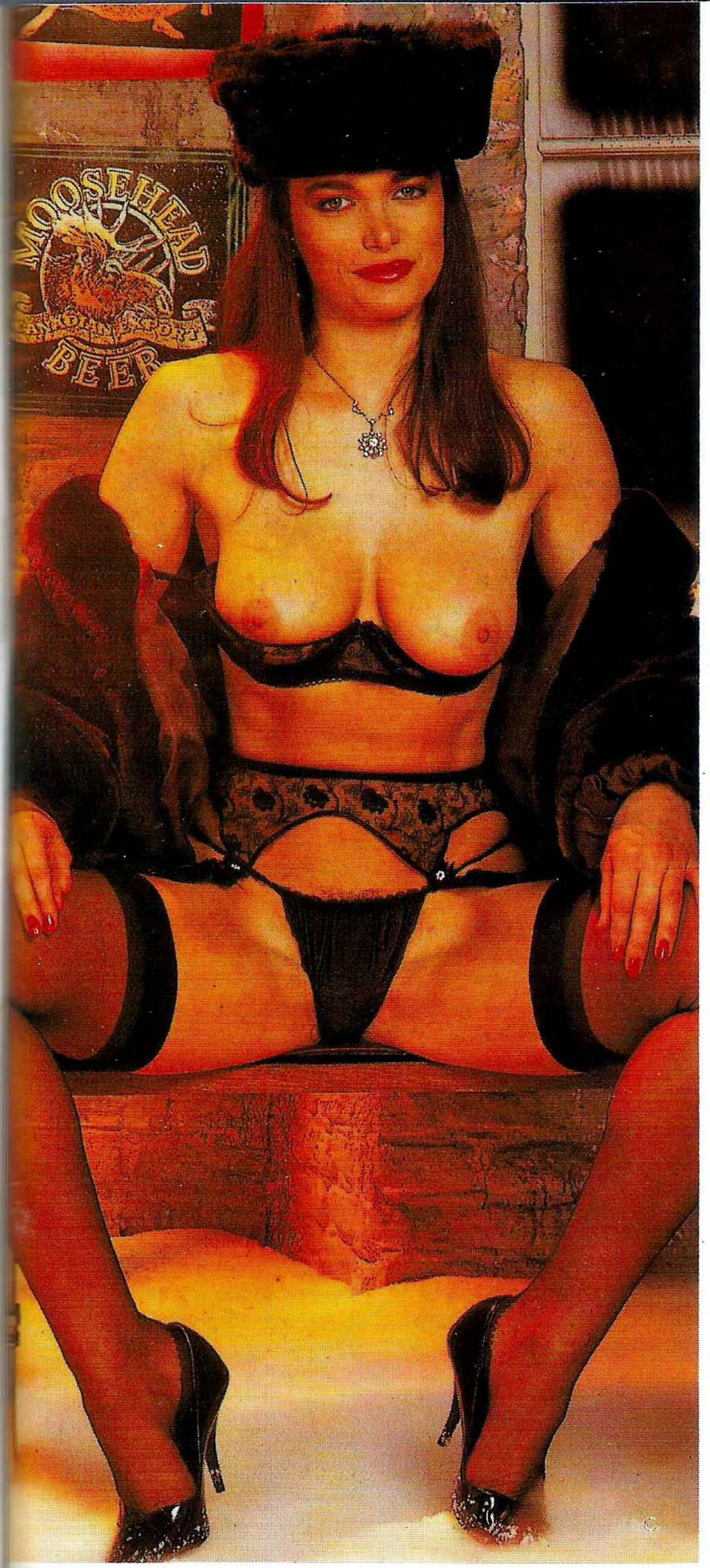
In a fit of juvenility, the Assistant Idiot would like us to believe that Rochelle is secreting a squeejee bottle inside one of her orifices. This is obviously a throwback to his own dubious adolescence...



VROOM-VROOM!

The lady who has 'busted clear out of her corsets again' is called Tullulah, a name I don't recall coming across except as attached to film star Tallulah Bankhead, who once said of herself "I'm pure as the driven slush." Intrigued, I put it to the model that there might be a Bankhead connection somewhere down the line. "I once gave a National Westmidland manager a blow-job behind the service till," she said, hoping this might throw some light on the matter. Your confused reporter made his excuses and left. Apparently, this lovely was once a motor mechanic, which prompts the blurb writer to "wonder if she can do something about my tappets?" I'll lend her some coarse emery paper if it will help.





GLASNOST GIRLIE

It is Christmas in your time-zone, or so El Gutto the gross Editor informs me – living in a temporal warp, we hacks need to be informed of this kind of thing. *(I alwasy knew you were warped – Ed.)* I suppose I am expected to point out what a bumper batch of crackers we have for you this issue, and note as an aside that I wouldn't mind pulling any of them. There you go – I have. Yawn!

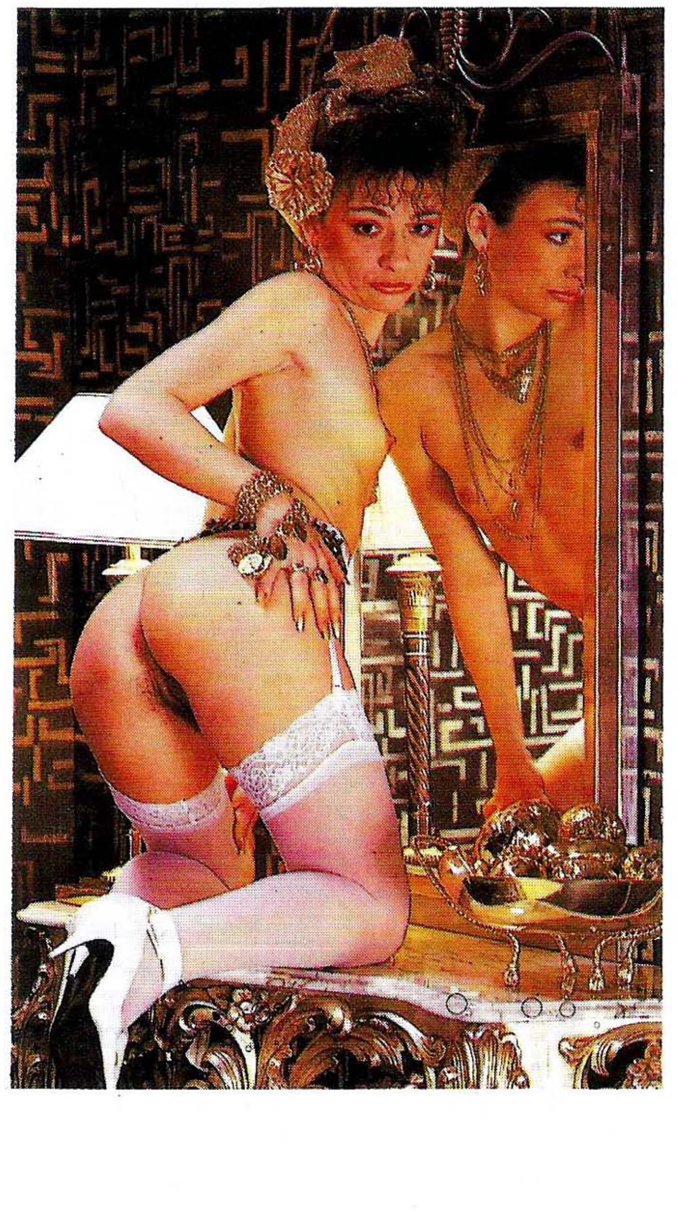
Hunting through the girlie sets for this issue, I find that there is (amazingly) even one with artificial snow in it. On the first day of Christmas, El Gutto gave to me, Anna – that's her in the non-contraceptive cap developing chilblains in the unlikeliest of places. She is, says the punch-drunk blurbist, Russian. Hmm. "Try and imagine that this really is Moscow station, would you?" whimpers the desperate dildo. *Moscow*? Come Boxing Day we'll give him his seasonal gift of a pair of spectacles so he can read the Canadian beer advertisement and blush deeply.

WET DREAMS

One way to tell that it's the festive season in smutland is to keep your eyes peeled for signs of mentally deficient young men in the photographs. Just as the old chestnut has it that Santa Claus only comes once a year, much the same is genuinely true for Assistant Editors, whose annual ejaculation is an involuntary omission occasioned by being allowed to appear in a photo set with a naughty naked nude. Hence the ludicrous foursome you see here. The two wallies are not – as the blurb implies – called Alastair and Quentin, but are our very own staff sheep-shagger and the equivalent dolt from some magazine called *XS* that probably also soils the shelves of your local newsagent. The girls are Maggie and Mandy. You will have to work out yourselves who is which in this quartet – I'm too busy worrying about whether they remembered to dry-clean that unfortunate teddy bear.

PERCY'S PROGRESS

Offering readers a double-take in her boudoir looking-glass is Shelley – "poetry in motion..." but she "doesn't have the literary bent of her namesake." That's assuming we're talking *Percy* Shelley, though. Let us not forget that Mary was the inventor of Frankenstein and his monster, which might suggest a reasonable explanation for our model showing an unexpected interest in El Gutto the grotesque Editor. Perhaps she is looking for material for a sequel. Apparently, Shelley's off to France if her appearance in Knave leads to anything. That is likely. By this time next year, she'll be on the run...



OFF TO OZ

"Oh yes – very fucking seasonal," we say to ourselves, slobbering at the sight of a violet-stockinged lovely posing against a whitewashed sea-wall and a perfect blue sky, the likes of which I don't recall seeing in the entire British so-called summer. Only this last factor discourages me from thinking that Daria was captured on celluloid at Clacton last July. In fact, the setting is a tinnie's throw from Bondi beach, Oz, and therefore, it really is Christmas. This, at any rate, is what the monstrous Assistant Editor, El Barfo, tells us in his blurb, and we all know how legal, decent, honest and truthful *his* copy is, don't we. Must have been Clacton a year *last* July.

Girl CHAT

ROOFTOP RAVER

Wot, no reindeer? Yes, I was wondering that, too. In-depth investigations reveal that the studio manager did, in fact, procure such a boast, but the company accountant took an immediate shine to the animal (matching red noses, I expect) and both had vanished by the time the photographer arrived. I understand they have now set up home together in Droitwich and are negotiating to see their story to the *Sunday Bonk.* Panicking at the lack of Scandinavian flavour in his winter extravaganza, El Barfo sobered up for just long enough to remember that there was an amatuer model whose name he was never able to pronounce, so in came Freya Ahlqvist (black top, inadequate white skirt) to freeze her fundamentals on the roof and generally save the day. Good-oh, I say — better than a reindeer any day. Still there's no accounting for some people's tastes...

WOLF AT THE DOOR

The lace-gloved lass pointing one pert nipple at the camera is Lois. It was the wrong time of the month, I understand — not for Lois, but for El Gutto.

In approximately synchronous (and supernaturally suspicious) relation to the lunar cycle, our Beloved Editor periodically discovers that he has spent what remains of the issue's budget down at the Grevious Bodily Arms, hence the ultra-expensive tail-end-of-the-month sets — in this case incorporating the office net curtains. Lois brought her own chains and gloves, it says here. I hope she also remembered to bring the silver bullets...

PEONY TALE

The smiling blonde with a large peony sticking out from behind her left lughole is called Danielle. I can't swear that it *is* a peony, mind, my sense of botany being as short of perfect as is the Art Editor's sight, but I certainly find myself unable to go along with the blurb-writer's description of this floral appendage as an "unfortunate growth". Readers may be puzzled by this leading on, in the girlie blurb, by references to physical abnormalities in the Art Dept. staff. I shall not distress you with full details, but if you ever see their aforementioned Editor's name listed among the entrants for a three-legged race, retire hurt and slope off to the bar — you wouldn't stand a chance!

BONNIE BITS

Disporting herself in almost Boticelli-ish *(Isn't that some sort of pasta? — Asst. Ed.)* pose on the pink sofa is a beauty called Bonnie. Whether she lies over the ocean, I cannot guess, but she seemed unusually honest in Essex, candidly admitting to the blurbist that she's "not interested in one-night stands... prefers her men to last a little longer." This sort of frankness is always a blow to one-minute stands such as Galaxy's Managing Director, who took the news very badly and spent the rest of the week sulking and answering mail-order advertisements for hair transplants.

I'll never get him to sign my expenses at this rate...

SAUCY LADY

How very seasonal, we think to ourselves — a picture of a girl sunbathing on a bench before a display of summer greenery! Her name is Roux, which other cooks out there will recognise immediately as a type of French sauce: most apposite for naughty pictures taken in the Pyrenean foothills (in August, as it happens). For those who do not dabble in kitchen craft, by the way, the name is pronounced as if her mother were called Kanga. Readers may now Christmassify the experience by reciting to themselves old jokes about what sunbathing wenches have in common with turkeys. Personally, I can't spot any white meat at all.

ANNA

MOOSEHEAD
CANADIAN
BEER
M.E.H.
GRAND
HOTEL LIDO
LIDO-VENEZIA
N.Y.K. LINE
NOT WANTED
ON VOYAGE
2

ЗА СОВЕТСКУЮ ОТЧИЗНУ ИДУТ В БОЙ СЫНЫ ВСЕХ НАРОДОВ СОВЕТСКОГО СОЮЗА.
ДА ЗДРАВСТВУЕТ КРАСНАЯ АРМИЯ—АРМИЯ БРАТСТВА И ДРУЖБЫ НАРОДОВ СССР!
ПОД ЗНАМЕНЕМ ЛЕНИНА—СТАЛИНА ВПЕРЕД, НА ЗАПАД!
RAPALLO
GRAND HOTEL LIDO LIDO-VENEZIA
N.Y.K. LINE
NOT WANTED ON VOYAGE

BEER
GRAND HOTEL LIDO VENEZIA
N.Y.K. LINE

Speak softly, love, now that it's over... Oh, sorry – got carried away by the ambience of it all. Here's Anna, our Russian royalty. Look – she was rushin' all the way here and *we* think she's a bit of a princess! Anna's graced these pages before, and not so very long ago either – we last saw her a couple of months ago, and simply had to ask her back for more of the same!
Some cruel swine suggested that I make a crack about Anna being all fur coat and no knickers, but I thought that was a bit low, even for a *Knave* blurb. By the way, I don't suppose you'd actually be very kind and try and imagine that this really is Moscow station, would you? It would make our set designer very happy...

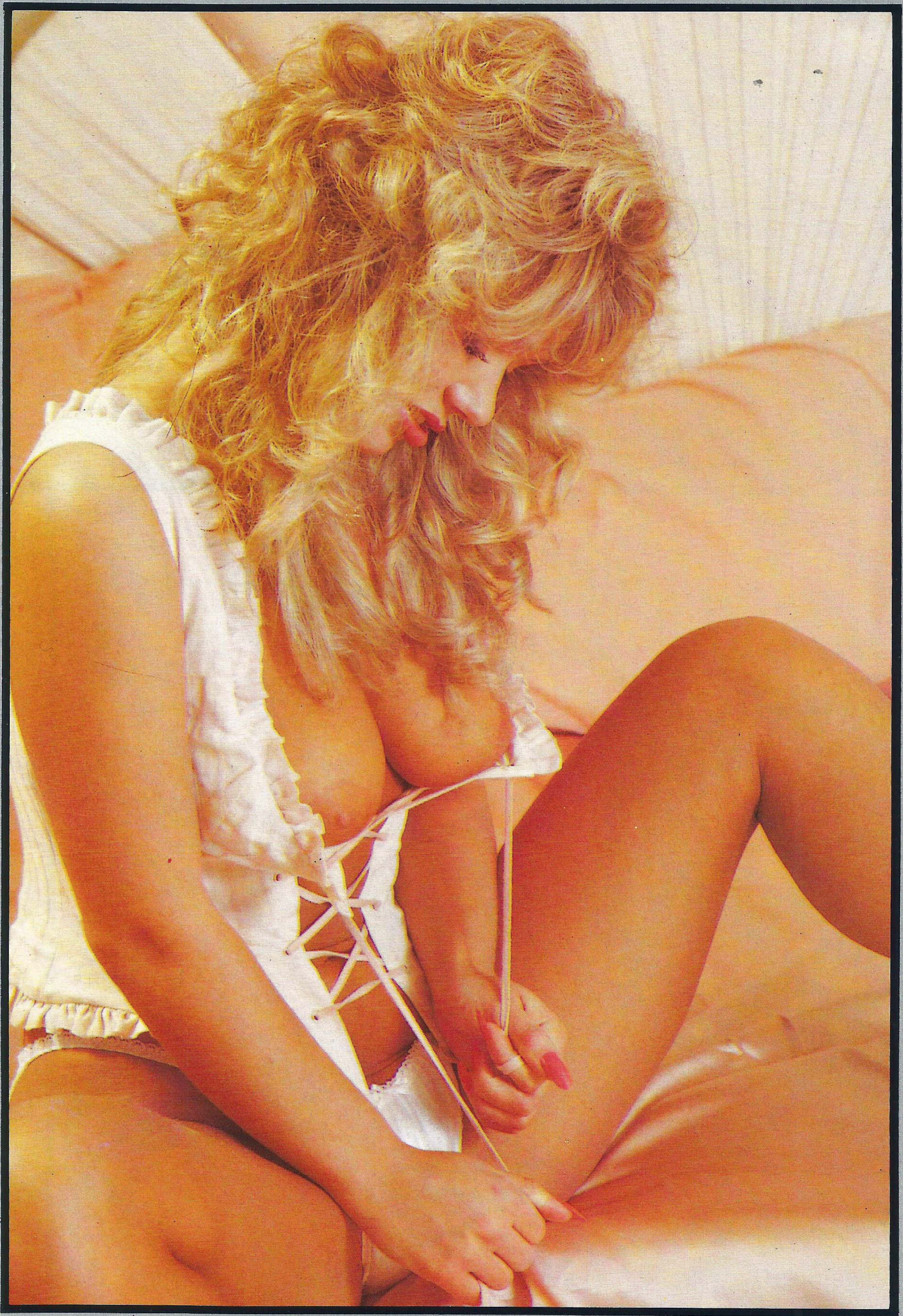
PHOTOGRAPHED BY AUSTIN LEGREW

MOOSEHEAD
CANADIAN EXPORT
BEER

RAPALLO
CATARACT HOTEL
VENEZIA

CATARACT HOTEL
Y.K. LIN
T WANTE
N VOYAGE

MOOSEHEAD
CANADIAN EXPORT
BEER



TALLULAH

This lady's called Tallulah and, oh dear, she's busted clean out of her corsets again. Honestly, we no sooner put these girlies in the loveliest, scrummiest clobber, than they've outgrown it — never mind, at least the boots still fit!

Tallulah used to be a motor mechanic before she became a model, but she found that displaying her own chassis was a bit more lucrative than patching up someone else's. I wonder if she can do something about my tappets . . .?

PHOTOGRAPHED BY REX KING

It's still possible to go motor racing single-handed provided you've got the car — and the loot. But to go rallying, you really need your Mates, as DAVID HARDY found out in wildest south Leicestershire. Oh yes, £16,000-worth of Lancia helps a lot as well...

Serious minded lot, these rally types. Let's face it, driving off to unpronouncable places in the middle of dripping Welsh woods, drinking flat ale, consuming soggy sandwiches, all to watch a hundred other loonies destroying their cars against fir trees... not much to laugh about is there?

Honestly though, it's one of those perverse bugs which bites deep and risks getting you addicted for life, like spotted dick, nurses uniforms and cider, I suppose. Steven Smith, a perfectly respectable property man from Bedfordshire, isn't into any of those things (so he claims), but the forest racing scene found a place in his heart years ago and it's going to take something fairly cataclysmic — probably marriage — to replace it.

The difference between Steven and those other spotty herberts who prance about from boulder to tree trunk, converting elderly Escorts into something fit only for a scrap man's crusher, is that he's actually rather good at it and wins prizes. He won a few with the inevitable Escort, then a few more with a pokey old BMW in Belgium and Holland, then found a few bob to buy a Lancia Delta. That went along quite rapidly and caused a few stirrings amongst the men who import Lancias from Italy and the next thing — whaddya know — young S.S. has organised himself a brand spankers Delta Integrale worth a cool £16,000 *before* you start bolting on the sumpguard! Even with help from the Lancophiles, the mods and the running costs were enough to blow a valve on anyone's personal Amstrad, so some outside sponsorship was next on the agenda. A Lancia dealer (who needs no introduction from the pretty pictures) and Charlie Browns Autocentres helped to keep the bank cool, but it was Steven's mates who really rallied round (sorry) when he was most in need. Richard Branson's protection racket accepted an invitation to cover up (get it?) part of the Integrale's curvy bits to prevent further accidents with the budget and give them some pretty impressive exposure. Rallying is virgin territory for the condom market and we reckon Steven deserves a knighthood for pulling it off. In fact the whole team (Integrale means 'whole' according to our dictionary) hope it will improve *Mates'* market penetration, in the forests or anywhere else for that matter.

Now we've got that lot off our chest (?) it must be time to tell you about the car without further interruption (??). Billed as the ultimate sports hatchback, the FWD flier is derived from the 1987 World Rally Championship winning Delta HF and proved it's pedigree this year by taking the title back to spaghetti land yet again. A deceptive little beast, if you can imagine it without all the lettering and roll bars; in fact, apart from those rather sexy flared arches, it would look quite at home in the vicarage driveway and wouldn't turn too many heads at the average posing pub. But under the metallic skin of the five door hatch there are enough goodies for any boy-racer's Christmas pillow case and more besides.

Let's start at the sharp end, where you'd need to be a double-jointed contortionist's apprentice with sockets for finger ends to actually do any work on the engine. Yes, the engine bay *is* that crowded and Steven's been told that if the starter motor packs up, he'll just have to bump start it for the rest of the rally because there will never be enough time to change it!

Crammed under the lid, you find 2 litres of alloy-headed twin cam by an inter-cooled Garrett T3 turbocharger and Weber Marelli fuel injection, surprisingly breathing via only two valves per cylinder. This is still good enough to give 185bhp at 5,300 rpm, which isn't *quite* as sexy and satisfying as it sounds. Rumour has it that by the time the New Year sales open, Lancia will have a four valve per cylinder job on the way with a lot more torque to boost the mid-range

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Castrol
JOHN HOSMER
The Lancia Specialist
E964DW
Rallye 2000
Hella
Rallye 1000
MICHELIN
MINTEX brake pads
KAYEL
26

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDY MORGAN

power band and avoid excess stirring of the gearshift.

The turbo boost starts at about 2000 rpm, but the mother-in-law wouldn't know anything was different until you see about twice that on the revcounter, at which time the level of push has climbed to over 0.95 bar and she should be ready to climb over the back of the seat. Weighing in at over 3000 lbs the heavy little monster (no, not the mother-in-law...) thus disappoints a little when it comes to top speed. At a true 128 mph flat in fifth gear, you would actually be steadily overhauled by the comparatively low-tech Vauxhall Astra GTE. And if it was that plain red one the Feds are using on the M1 these days, oh boy, would you be in trouble!

No, with a car like this and a sport like rallying, high top speed is Not The Name of the Game. What this little package is all about is going round corners with more speed, grip and commitment than anyone could have expected from a production five-door car even two years ago. Yes, really.

Most of the reason for this is permanent four-wheel drive which is so dramatically good, you get the impression that the car would do 90mph hairpins on ice with MoT failed tyres.

The transverse power unit drives an epicyclic central diff which sends 55% of the torque to the front wheels and the rest to the back. A good ol' British Ferguson viscous coupling (no, *vicious* is what you feel if it breaks) acts as a limited slip twixt the two while the back and also has a Swedish Torsen diff compensating for the dramatic but wasteful wheelspin. Controlling all this high-tech but heavy hardware is a slick 5-speed gear box, giving maximum speeds of 40mph in 1st, 63mph in 2nd, 93mph in 4th and 128, as we said, in top.

With an Integrale bought from a Lancia dealer, you'll have to sit on the wrong side of that gearlever, something we've never really objected to except when trapped behind big trucks on straight, single-carriageway roads. However, if you really must have a right hooker, a search through the ads will yield at least one outfit doing conversions. Whichever side the wheel sits, it attaches to hydraulic power assisted steering with 2.8 turns lock to lock and an accurate joy to use. And that's a lot more than we can say for some right hookers: *boom-boom!*

Castrol
KAVEL
26
MICHELIN
Hella
JOHN HOSKER

STEVEN SMITH. Arh+
Hella
E964 DWV
MICHELIN
MINTEX

Talking of hookers brings us to suspenders and a logical opportunity to tell you that the Integrale unsurprisingly uses the MacPherson struts, so beloved of the rally brigade, on all four corners. However, the platforms on which the short coil springs sit are incredibly close to the tyres, especially at the sharp end. This gave rise to great tearing of hair at the start of the Welsh International, Steven's first entry for the car back in May. There are just no way that Mr Michelin's serious rally rubber, specified for the car, would clear the front suspension and rather than slide off the gravel on unsuitable tyres, the car went back on the trailer and the crew went back to the bar. Discretion was the better part of valour (whatever that means) and the right combination was found for the rest of the season.

Brakes are particularly useful with 185 bhp under your toe and discs are used all round, ventilated on the front and shod in this case with Mintex pads.

No smaller than your average small four-door car this, but when you first get comfy in the Recaro seats, it does feel like you've just put the car on rather than climbed into it. Perhaps it's the multi-point fixed roll cage and full harness belts (mandatory for rallying of course) but I've passengered in a standard model too and there's a very one-to-one ambience with the Integrale. You immediately get the feel you're there to work together rather than fight it out. The opposite of the old 3-litre Capri or Porsche 911 for example, where it was a case of "You or me are the boss around here son, and I'm telling you now it's going to be me." In both cases, of course, that was the car speaking, and in both cases it was right.

The Italian job, by contrast, is there to do your bidding and the instructions from either hand or foot would have to be of truly Titanic, Light Brigade or Custer-style proportions to produce anything resembling a disaster. Having hurled around the lanes (where I think I said before, the four wheel drive is in its element), we can only agree with the man from Autocar a few months back who wrote, and I quote:

"It was virtually impossible to get into trouble. On blind, twisty roads, the Integrale is faster, much more tolerant of mistakes, easier to get back into shape and generally inspires more confidence. In the wet, it's no contest."

There must have been some party down at Lancia HQ when that publication hit the desks. The man was contrasting the Integrale against £89,700-worth and 390 bhp-worth of Ferrari Testarossa! Although I also agree with the man's acceleration figures of 6.4 secs from 0-60mph, I have to say that Steven's rally version doesn't suffer from the strong understeer he found on the standard model.

Understeering, or going through the hedge forwards with the wheel hard over and no effect, is expensive and potentially painful. This is how most single car accidents happen in slippery conditions and, needless to say, is aggravated by slapping on the anchors. You just can't expect the twiddly bits at the front to both steer and brake at the same time. Apparently some of the standard Integrales do this and you need to be pretty vicious to unstick the back end.

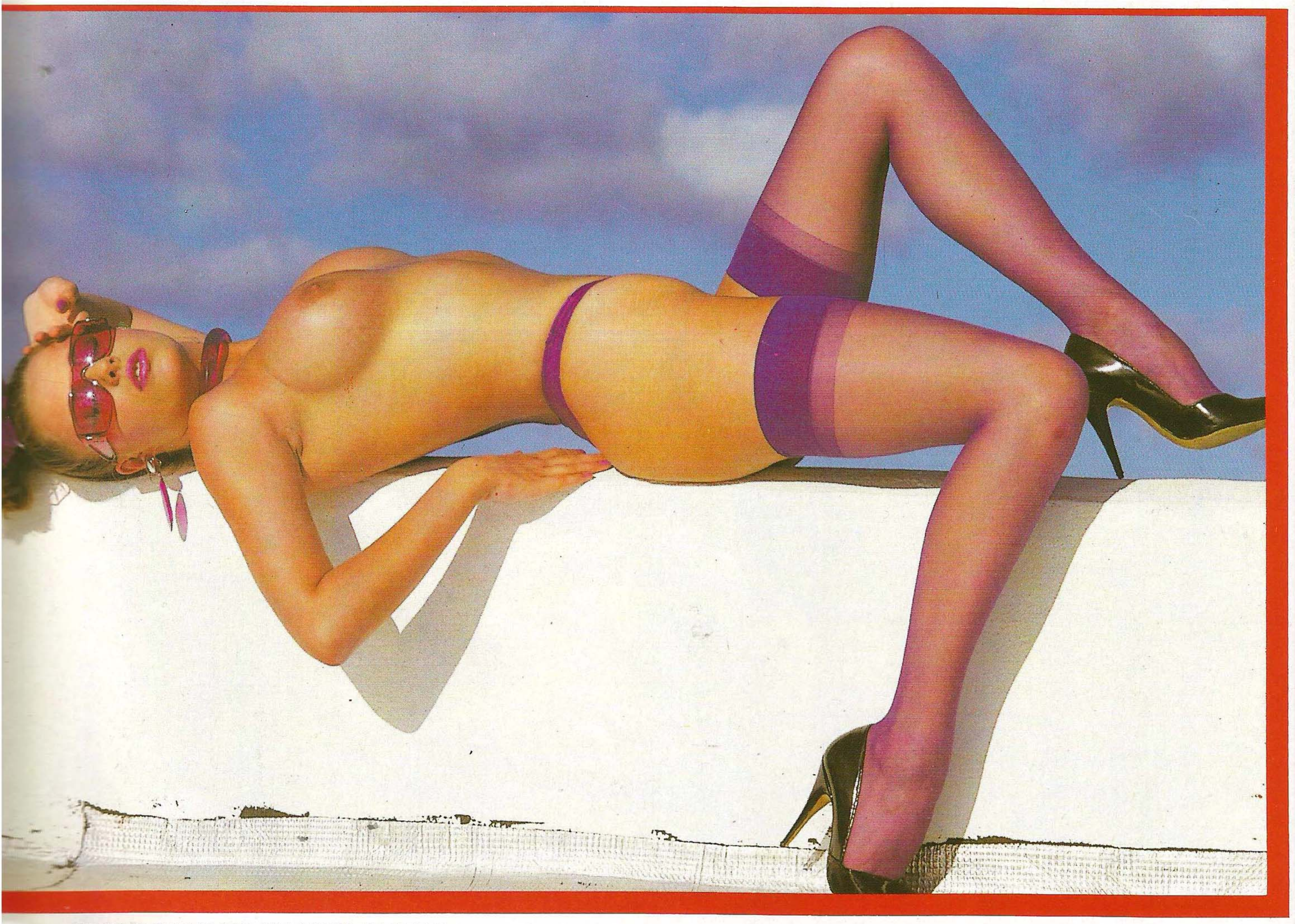
Steven's Mates *(Not again! — Ed.)* must have found a few new positions (groan) for the suspension, however, because this car controllably tail slides almost as easily as an old rear drive car, points its nose into the apex of the corner and powers round on rails. Known to the purists as an oversteering car (or going through the hedge backwards if you over-do it!). Rally people do bend cars and for generations have understood that it is mostly cheaper to bend the back ends than the fronts. Hard statistics are now bearing them out and in the quest for safe 'collapsibility', car makers are deliberately spreading front impacts as far as possible over the bodyshell. BMW boasted this year that their new cars spread impacts so well that a 30 degree front smash at (only) 30mph results in ripples on the roof! Not only a good argument for hitting things backwards in an emergency but a very good reason for getting out of the insurance or write-off rebuilding business!

But I digress. At the time of writing, Steven had collected a respectable sideboard full of pots with the Integrale, but as it is entered in Group N (unmodified class) it quite simply hasn't got the basic grunt of the Cosworth Sierras which have been cleaning up this season. Especially in the dry when said grunt means more than four wheel drive. So, the dilemma at the time of writing is simply whether to find a few more Mates to pay for a million dollar group, a conversion or swop the car for a Cosworth. Having posed successfully in this tweaky, extrovert roller skate of a car, I hope the team takes the first route. After all, the Integrale is actually a pleasure to drive on the road day to day and, some may say, a closer to the concept of a tractable sports saloon. There is also a good case to be made out for keeping the car standard, but fitting only the roll over cage. It keeps the roof off your head if you do manage a really silly manoevre — but more important, it makes the back seat totally useless. Mother-in-law would have to take the bus!

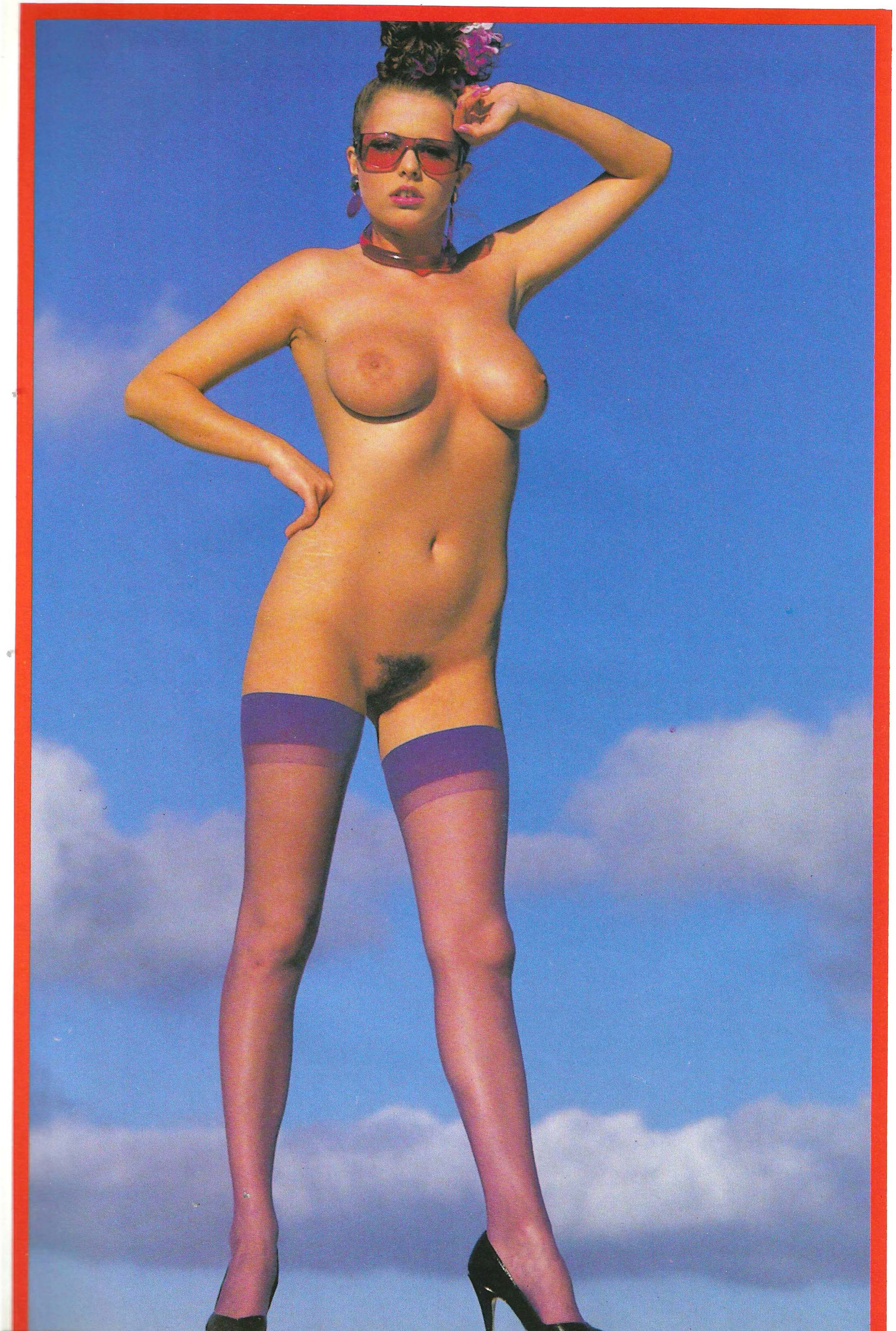
DARIA

I bet you're thinking that we've run out of seasonal sets and decided to resort to stuff we took in the summer, aren't you? Well, pilgrim, you're wrong, see — this *is* Christmas, and the lady *is* contemplating going indoors for her breast and stuffing. Unfortunately, it is also about two miles north of Bondi Beach. Surf's up!

It's a while since we've analysed a girlie's name, so Daria means 'Wealthy Queen'. Look, this place she's lounging about in is her own, and it's in one of the most highly sought-after residential areas of Sydney — she's bound to have a few bob, isn't she? Hmm — 'Wealthy Queen' — that reminds me, I wonder what our video reviewer's carving up this issue...?



PHOTOGRAPHED BY NICK GURGUL



LOTS OF THINGS YOU DIDN'T NEED TO KNOW ABOUT XMAS

A gift-wrapped selection of seasonal trivia that week by week builds into a golden compendium of rubbish that you couldn't give a toss about. Compiled by Eugene Byrne.

- THERE ARE three Christmas Islands, one in Canada, one south of Java, and one in the central Pacific. The latter comprises four towns, named London, Paris, Poland and Banana.

- The Roman Emperor Constantine converted to Christianity, and shortly afterwards decreed that the birth of Christ should be celebrated on December 25th. In the Roman calendar, this was the date of the winter solstice, the day on which the sun is, as it were, "reborn". It was right in the middle of the pagan festival of the Saturnalia, and so people could still have a good knees-up if they became Christians. The date also had the advantage of being exactly nine months after the feast of the Incarnation, the day on which the Holy Spirit had made the Virgin Mary pregnant. This, theologians later decided, He did via her *ear* — thus preserving her virginity intact.

- Father Christmas is a man with a complicated background, only half of it — that of Saint Nicholas of Myra — of Christian origin. The very existence of Saint Nicholas of Myra is extremely doubtful. Born in modern day Turkey, he is supposed to have stood up and praised the Lord even as a mere babe in arms. When he later inherited his father's considerable fortune, he gave the lot away to the poor. On one occasion, he is supposed to have saved three young women from having to turn to prostitution to earn a living by throwing balls of gold through their windows, so that each might have a dowry with which to attract a husband. For this reason, Saint Nick is patron saint of pawnbrokers, who adopted his three balls as their trademark.

- Nicholas is also patron saint of children. This is because during a famine, he discovered that an innkeeper had killed some children and pickled them in barrels, intending to serve them to his guests as meat (this was in the days before they had public health inspectors). With a deft sign of the cross over each barrel, Saint Nicholas brought the kids back to life again.

- Because St. Nicholas's Day (December 6th) falls within the Christmas season he became associated with a mythical pagan figure who left gifts in the shoes of well-behaved children. The full integration of this Father Christmas (sometimes also known in English tradition as Captain Christmas) and Saint Nicholas occurred in 1823 with the publication in a New York newspaper of Professor Clement Clark Moore's poem, 'A Visit From Saint Nicholas'. The poem ('Twas the night before Christmas all over the house, not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse... etc., etc.) established Santa's character as a bluff, lovable old chap in a red and white suit who drove around in a flying sleigh towed by reindeer, and dropped down chimneys to leave presents in stockings. It became wildly popular. Moore had written it for his own children and it was published without his permission. He considered it frivolous and unimportant, particularly when placed alongside of his other achievements — his Hebrew dictionary, or his translation of Juvenal, for instance — but whether he like it or not, it's for 'The Night Before Christmas' he's best remembered.

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LOTS OF THINGS YOU DIDN'T NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CHRISTMAS

continued from the previous page

COSTA DEL SOL
BLACK PETE'S PACKAGE TOURS
Russ Tudor

ILLUSTRATION BY RUSS TUDOR

- In British and American tradition, Father Christmas is a dirty old man who likes to come down the chimmney – but he's not the same everywhere. In Switzerland, he has a wife called Lucy. In Holland, Sinte Klaas is accompanied by the not-nearly-so-nice Black Peter, who puts naughty children in his bag and takes them off to Spain. In France, Bonhomme Noel is accompanied by a similar character, Pere Fouettard, who points out the naughty children to Santa, who cannot then give them any presents. In Finland, Joulupukki, or Old Man Christmas, is a real character who lives in the Lapland town of Rovaniemi. As much a creation of his country's tourist industry as anything else, he spends most of his time answering letters from children and charging around on a sleigh for the benefit of the world's media.

- Just as the Christmas festival has pagan roots, the cliché that Christmas has "lost all its original meaning" and become disgracefully commercialised is also of very ancient origin. Even in 1848, a correspondent in the Illustrated London News could complain that "Thirty or forty years ago, people knew it was Christmas without being told so by an advertisement..."

- December 25th is celebrated for other reasons elsewhere in the world. In the Congo, it's Children's Day, it's Constitution Day in Taiwan and Family Day in Angola. It's celebrated as the Day of the Creation of the Mauretanian People's Republic in (you've guessed it) Mauretania!

- "Good" King Wenceslas (known as Vaclav in Czechoslivakia, as Wenzel in Germany), King of Germany and Bohemia from 1378 to 1389 was temperamentally idle and usually too drunk to stand up, let alone be "good." He would have been acting wildly out of character if, as the song states, he left his castle to help some peasant gather firewood.

- Boxing Day is so called not on account of any pugilistic connections, but because it was on this day that people used to collect their Christmas boxes. Up until Victorian times, it was traditional for servants, tradesmen and errand boys to go around collecting money from people and households they had served during the year and would be continuing to do so in the coming year. They would collect their money in a wooden or earthenware box, sometimes inscribed with the letters 'T.I.P.' standing for 'to insure promptness'. This is probably the origin of our modern word 'tip', which has nothing to do with what the dustmen will do with your rubbish on your doorstep if you forget *their* Christmas Box.

- William Claude Dukenfield, better known as Hollywood comedian W.C. Fields died on Christmas Day 1946. The inscription on his tombstone is reputed to read: "On the whole I would rather be in Philadelphia." Never one to take unnecessary risks, Fields salted money away in banks across America under various names, and even to this day much of his fortune is lying around untouched. Throughout the Second World War, he kept at least $50,000 in German bank accounts "just in case the little bastard wins."

- Novelist H.G. Wells spent Christmas morning 1923 playing with his new set of Britains toy soldiers. He was 57 years old at the time.

TIPS
TIPS
Russ Tudor

- Superstitious? Then beware December 28, also known as Childermass. On their way to Bethlehem, the Three Wise Men, or Magi (from which we get the word 'magic') called in at the court of King Herod, Roman puppet ruler of Judea. They told Herod that the kid being born in Bethlehem was to be 'King of the Jews', and he got a little paranoid. This was because *he* was supposed to be King of the Jews. Smelling a political threat, he ordered his soldiers to go and kill every child under two years of age in the Bethlehem area. Because of these woeful proceedings, December 28, the day on which they are marked, was reckoned in times past to be just about the most ill-starred of the year. On no account should you begin any new enterprise on that day. You shouldn't even try on new clothes. Stay in bed, and note that the day of the week on which Childermass falls is considered unlucky throughout the coming year.

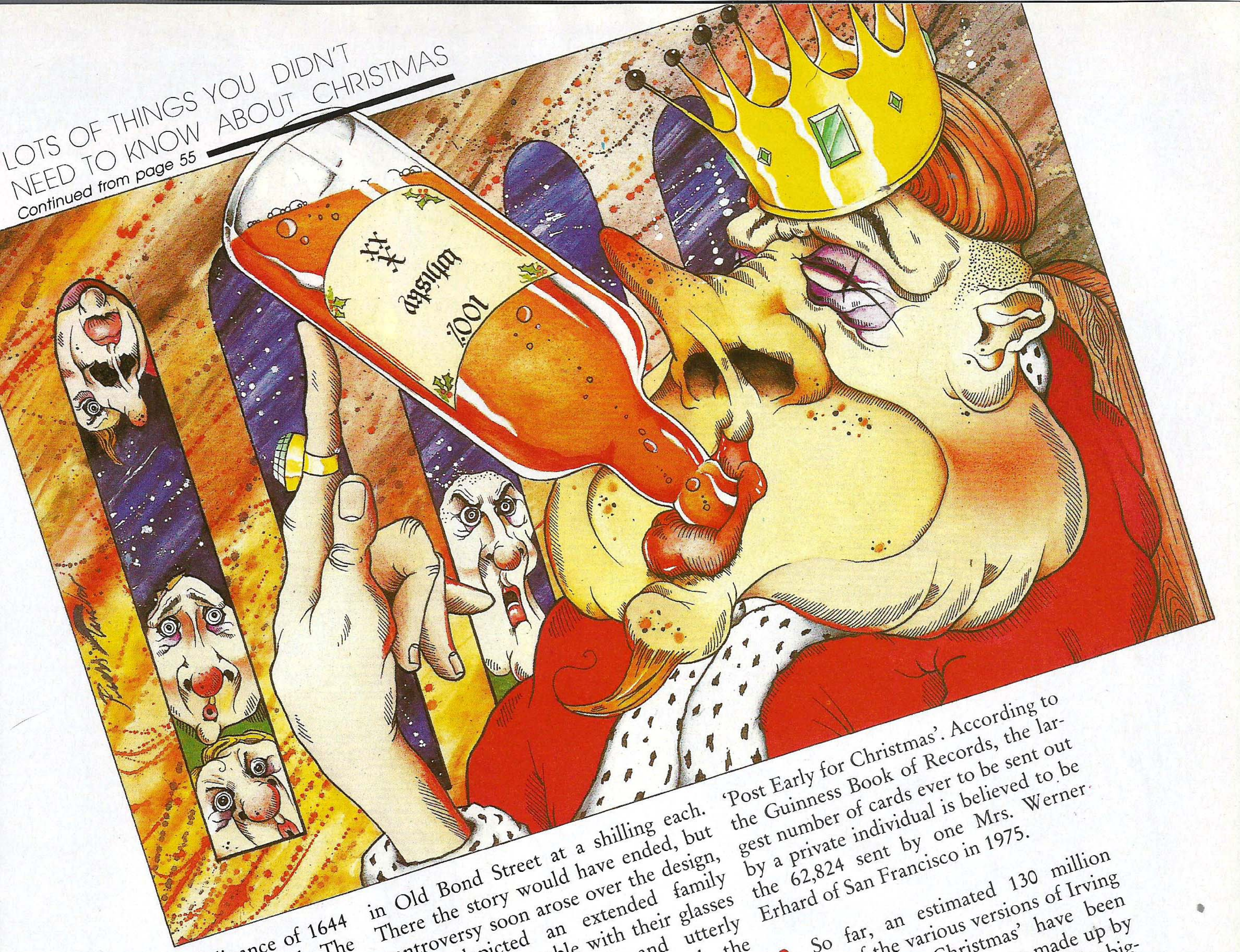
- Born on Christmas Day:
Sir Isaac Newton, mathematician, 1642.
William Collins, Poet, 1721.
Dorothy Wordsworth, sister of poet William, 1771.
Clara Barton, founder of American Red Cross, 1821.
Alexander Scriabin, Russian Composer, 1872.
Mohammad Ali Jinnah, founder of Pakistan, 1876.
Maurice Utrillo, French painter, 1883.
Conrad Hilton, founder of Hilton Hotels, 1887.
Dame Rebecca West, novelist, 1892.
Humphrey Bogart, film star, 1899.
Lew Grade, entertainment and TV mogul, 1906.
Andrew Cruikshank, Scottish actor (Dr. Cameron), 1907.
Anwar Sadat, President of Egypt, 1918.
Princess Alexandra (the Hon. Mrs. Angus Oglivy), 1936.
Vincent Furnier, alias rock musician Alice Cooper, 1945.

- On Christmas Day:
496 AD: Clovis, chief of the Frankish tribes in Gaul, is Baptised.
800 AD: Charlemagne is crowned Emperor of the West in Rome by Pope Leo III.
1066: Duke William the Bastard of Normandy crowned William I of England, Westminster.
1497: Portugese explorer Vasco da Gama discovers Natal.
1620: The Pilgrim Fathers land at Plymouth Rock.
1741: The centigrade (Celsius) temperature scale is first used at Uppsala, Sweden.
1855: Ice Hockey is invented by the Royal Canadian Rifles.
1864: Members of the Serpentine Swimming Club take their first Christmas Day dip.
1882: The first Christmas with electric tree lights is celebrated.
1926: Emperor Hirohito ascends throne of Japan.
1928: 'In Old Arizona', the first western talkie, is shown.
1932: First royal Christmas broadcast. A pre-recorded speech by King George V is broadcast on radio throughout the British empire.
1941: Hong Kong surrenders to invading Japanese.
1957: First televised Queen's speech.
1974: Darwin, Australia, devastated by cyclone.
1977: Charlie Chaplin dies.

Continued on page 57

LOTS OF THINGS YOU DIDN'T NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CHRISTMAS

Continued from page 55



A Parliamentary ordinance of 1644 abolished Christmas in England. The law, passed by a Parliament dominated by puritans who objected to the festival because of its pagan origins and because people enjoyed themselves during it, stayed in force for the next 12 years. Parliament sat as normal on Christmas Day, troops were used to ensure that London's shops opened for business as usual, churches were closed and the hanging of traditional decorations (such as holly, ivy and mistletoe) were forbidden. Despite all this, the festival continued to be celebrated secretly by many people. The leaders of the more puritanical colonies in New England also tried to do away with the festival. A law enacted in the General Court of Massachusetts in the 17th century declared that anyone caught celebrating Christmas would be fined five shillings (25p).

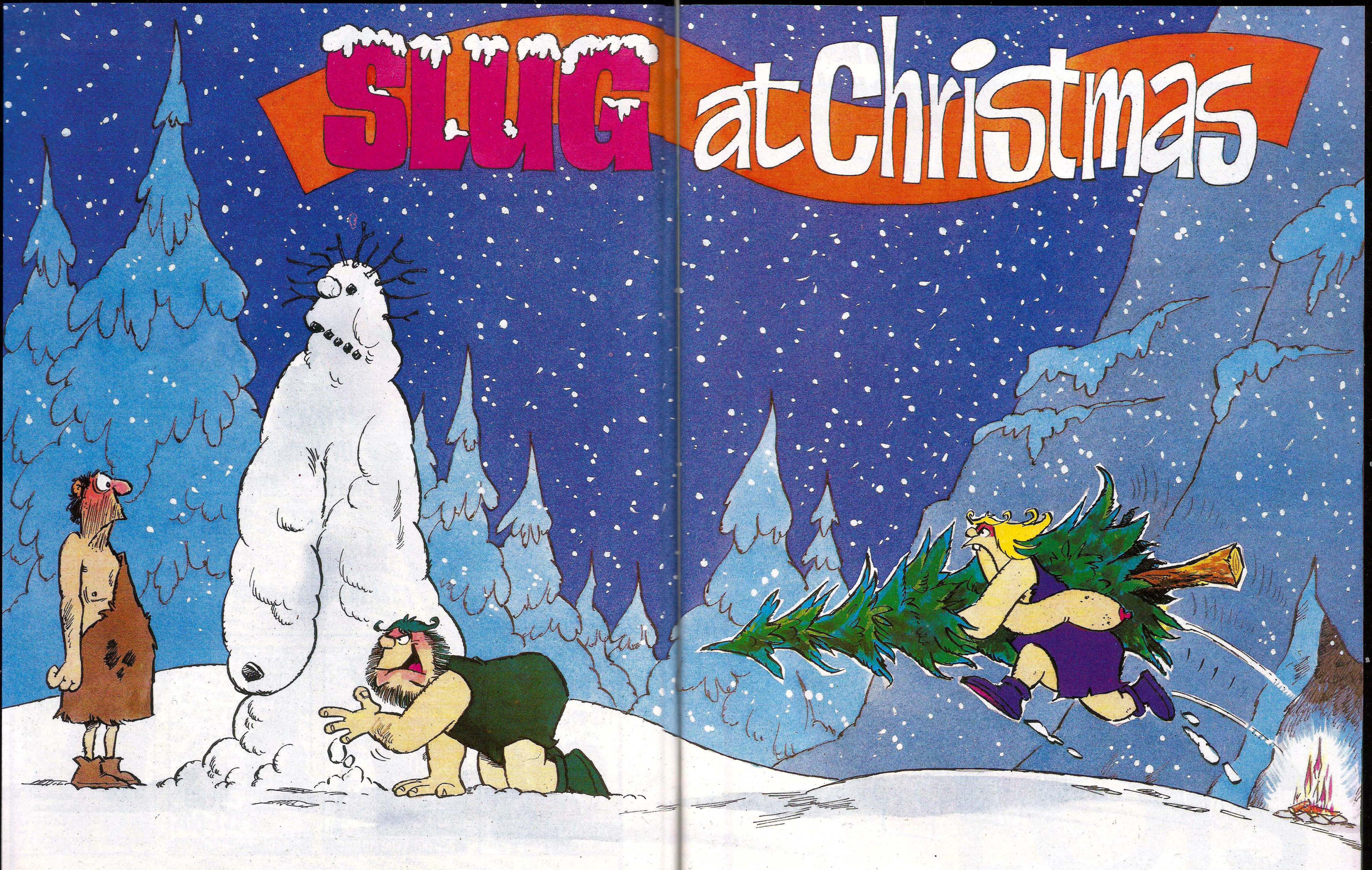
The Christmas Card is a British invention. It had been usual to write letters to friends and relatives conveying Christmas greetings, but in 1843 a clod by the name of Sir Henry Cole just didn't have enough time to write to everyone. So, he got the artist John Callcott Horsley to design a card for him. A thousand copies were printed, and all those not required by Horsley and Cole were sold by the printer from his shop in Old Bond Street at a shilling each. There the story would have ended, but controversy soon arose over the design, which depicted an extended family seated around a table with their glasses raised. This wholesome and utterly innocuous scene soon aroused the wrath of the moral majority, on the grounds that it encouraged alcoholism and drunkenness (in the same way that nowadays a single episode of *Miami Vice* will turn you into a drooling psychopath). The irony in this was that Horsley himself was a deeply puritanical man. In later years, he made a famous idiot of himself by campaigning against the use of nude female models by painters and sculptors. This earned him the nickname Clothes-Horsley.

In 1862, London Printers Charles Goodall & Sons were the first to go into large-scale production of Christmas cards. The earliest ones were like ordinary calling-cards, but soon became more elaborate, first with bits of holly and stuff for borders until by the late 1860's full-blown scenes of winter landscapes and robins had appeared. By 1871 the newspapers were complaining of the way in which people were trying to send more and better cards than their friends, and that all this Christmas mail was delaying more important letters from getting through. The first announcement that the advertiser wouldn't be sending any Christmas cards this year hit the personal column of 'The Times' in 1873. By 1880, the Post Office had adopted the slogan 'Post Early for Christmas'. According to the Guinness Book of Records, the largest number of cards ever to be sent out by a private individual is believed to be the 62,824 sent by one Mrs. Werner Erhard of San Francisco in 1975.

So far, an estimated 130 million records of the various versions of Irving Berlin's 'White Christmas' have been sold. 30 million of these are made up by the Bing Crosby version alone. The biggest-selling single of all time in the UK is Bob Geldof and Midge Ure's Band Aid record 'Do They Know It's Christmas?', which had sold almost 40 million worldwide by the middle of 1986. There have, of course, been numerous other successful Christmas records. For example, the Goons' 1956 hit, 'I'm Walking Backwards for Christmas (across the Irish Sea)' reached its highest point in the UK charts — number four — in July.

Knave has really funny deadlines. This article was written in July.

SLUG at Christmas



"Good, eh? I'm making a snowman of the old bag while she puts the Christmas Tree up somewhere!"

LOIS

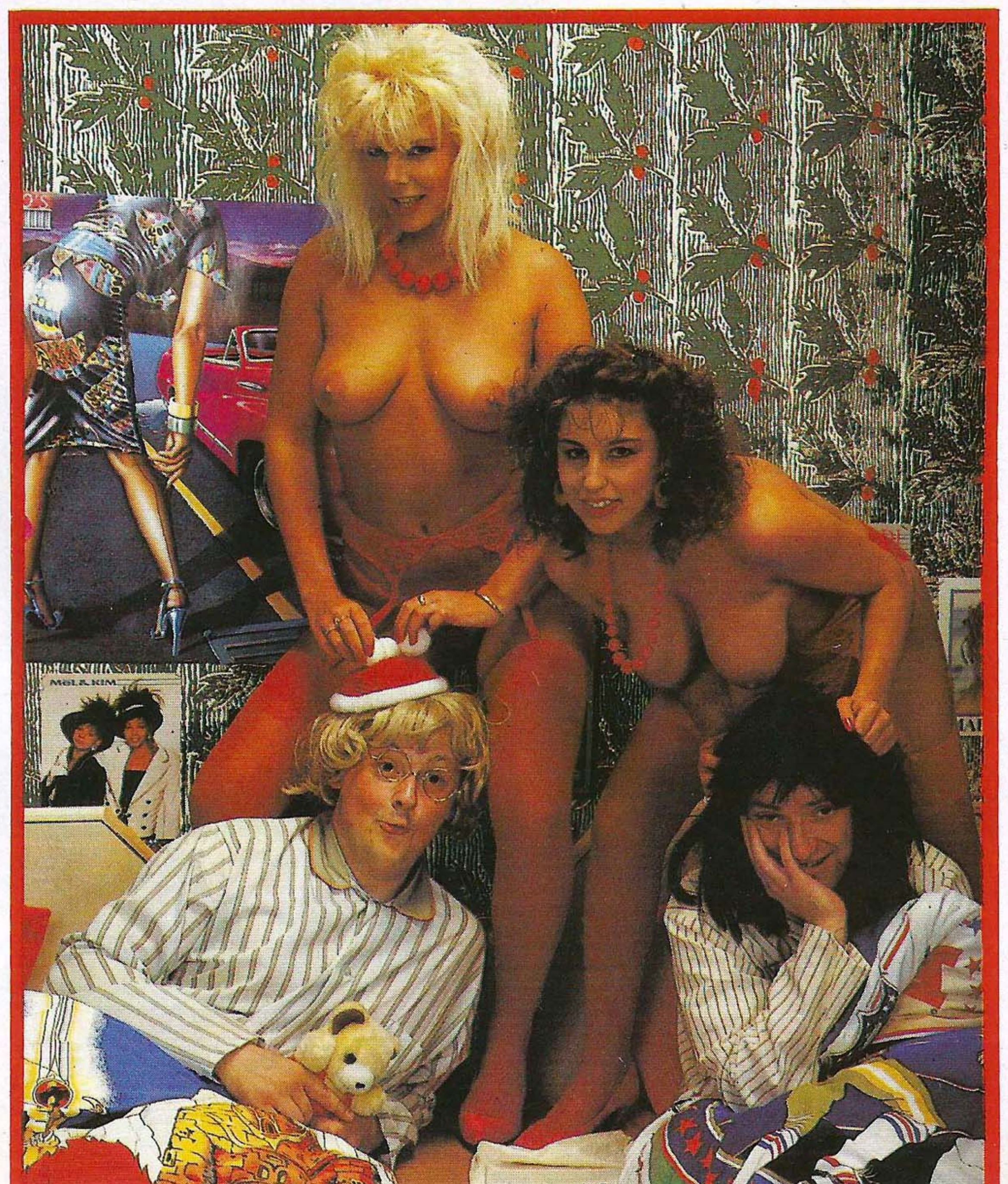
Ooh – this is a bit of an ominous one! You know the old story – it's getting to the end of the month, our Beloved Editor's purse is looking a bit worse for wear and so we have to resort to pinching the net curtains from the office windows (if you think they're dirty now, you should have seen them before they were washed!) and throwing together this little avant-garde number down in the basement.
Lois took to the sinister overtones like a proverbial duck, providing her own chains and knitted gloves (?) – it takes all sorts...

PHOTOGRAPHED BY AUSTIN LEGREW

MAGGIE & MANDY

Mel & Kim
STALLONE
RAMBO
HERO'S DANCING
NFL

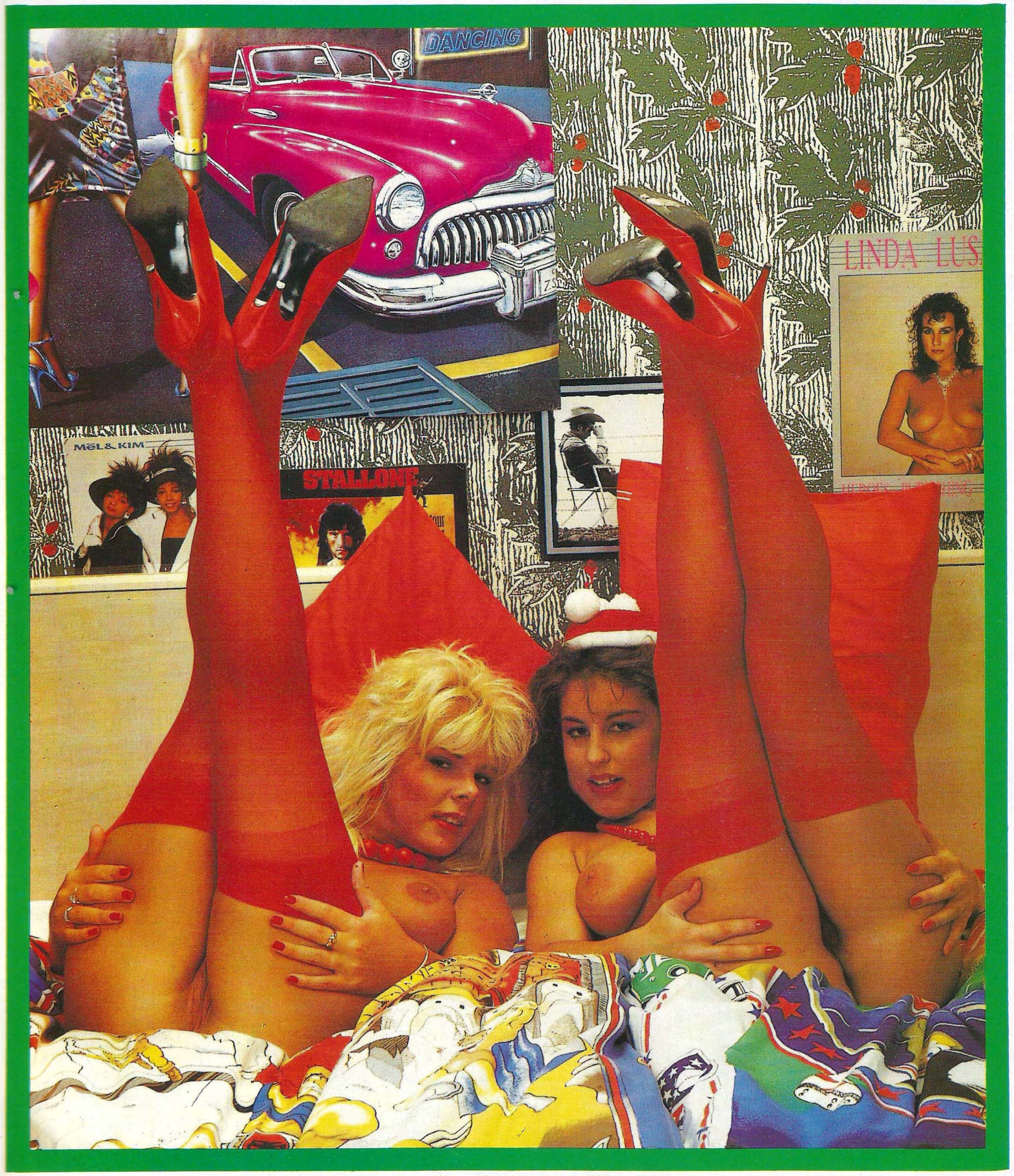
LINDA LUSARDI
MADONNA
a-ha



A rare treat this – a glimpse into the domestic arrangements of Alastair Ballsworthy, the new Knave office-boy. Here we see him tucked up on Christmas Eve with his little brother, Quentin. Yes, friends, this is a wimpy home in more ways than one!

So, Alastair and Quentin are just about to toddle off to the Land of Nod when *pop!*, look who's just dropped in for a mince pie and a quick noggin! "Santa couldn't make it this year, boys." say our two festive fillies, "So we've come to see just how good you two are before we give you what you deserve!"

Of course, our boy Alastair can't imagine what they mean, but Quentin's been hanging around outside the Grievous Bodily Arms again, and knows just what to do with his Christmas stocking! This lad needs something putting in his cocoa!


DANCING
LINDA LUS
MeL & KIM
STALLONE

HERO'S
LUSARDI
MeL & KIM
MAD

Maggie and Mandy have had a hard night too, making sure that every little boy gets his wish granted. Is it any surprise that they're behaving so strangely? Of course, they get so hot and bothered on their mission of goodwill, that they simply *have* to take their clothes off to cool down. Well, it stands to reason, doesn't it?

HERO'S
HERO'S
DANCING
LUSARDI

...est de retour
dans RAMBO II.

MAGGIE & MANDY

STALLONE
...est de ret
dans RAM
HEROES PUBLISHING CO
MAI

ROUX

Got the winter blues? Up to your chilly bits in slush and cold remedies? Well, get a load of this for a touch of summer solace – shot back in August when the Mediterranean was baking in 110°, in a monastery in the foothills of the Pyrenees. If that's not playing with *friar,* I don't know what is!

Picture the scene – we left Roux taking a look around the venerable establishment, when she suddenly disappeared. Apparently, she had been minding her own business and airing her stickies on the ramparts, when she suddenly remembered what her old Mum had said about getting into bad habits. Roux always listens to her Mum and we won't be invited back again...

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MICHAEL ANCHER

FREYA

Those of you with brilliant memories (or old issues of Knave) will remember that Freya's surname is Ahlqvist. We all tried to pronounce it, but only succeeded in ruining four sets of false teeth and an Axminster carpet. Phonetics on a postcard, please...

PHOTOGRAPHED BY GEOFF HAYES

We last saw Freya in Knave Vol. 19 No. 12, as an amateur model, and it's great to bring her back in time for the festivities! No sooner was the brave girl in the building, than she insisted upon doing this set up in the Galaxy roof garden, in temperatures that would freeze the wallet off an Editor. I like a woman with grit!

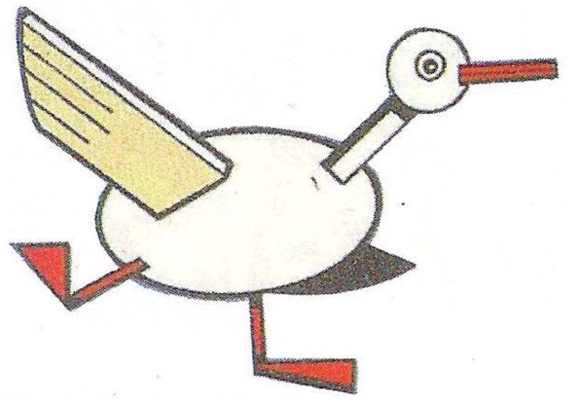
HAPPY XMAS YOU'RE NICKED!

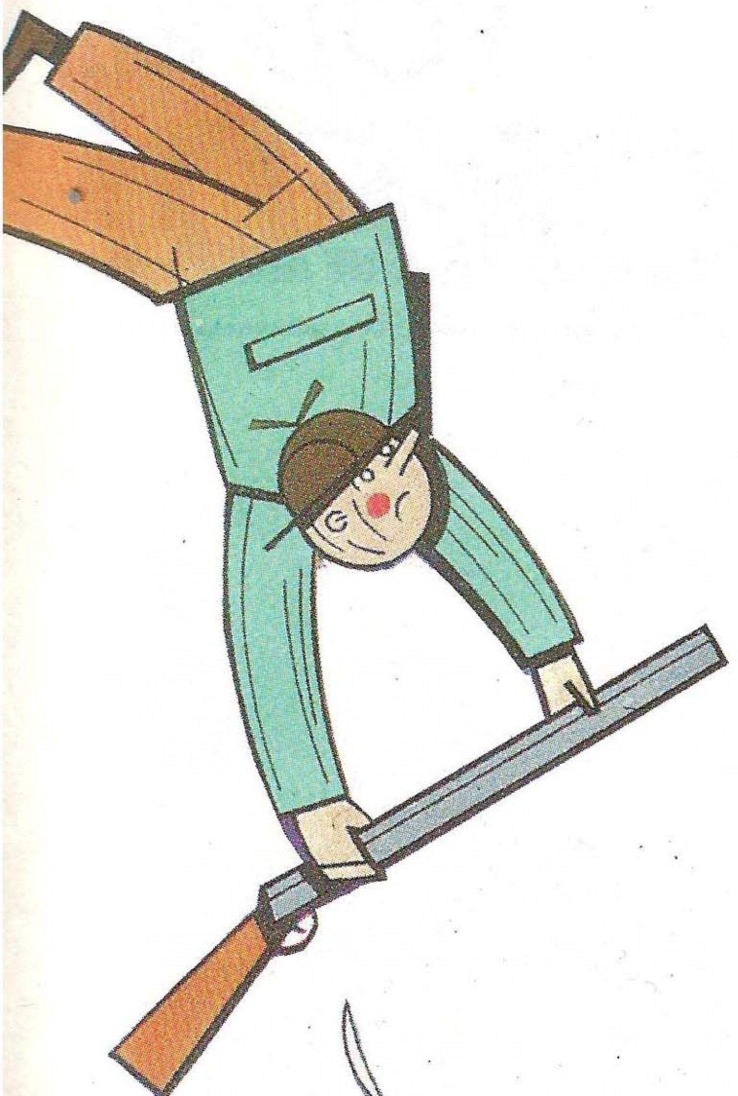
Continued on page 112

ILLUSTRATION BY KEVIN O'KEEFE

Continued from page 111

As it's the season of goodwill, let's put aside our petty differences, and spare a thought for the hard-working bobby on the beat. Did you know that, by being on duty on Christmas Day, he's breaking the very law he's supposed to be enforcing? There you go, then – as GEOFFREY HUMPHRYS reveals, sometimes the law is an ass, a couple of cows and three shepherds, to boot!





If all the laws on the Statute Book were strictly enforced, Christmas Day, in spite of all the wishes received for a Happy Christmas, would be an unhappy day for almost everyone in Britain! Understaffed police forces would have to put their entire complements on duty; police stations could not cope with the legion of offenders; every detention centre would be packed to capacity; every cell in every prison would be overcrowded; and even then, only a very small fraction of the regular Christmas Day lawbreakers would be detained at Her Majesty's pleasure...

"Other sportsmen since have made representations to gain Christmas Day recognition for their sports."

Those who pride themselves on being law-abiding citizens, may or may not be able to keep on the right side of the law for 364 days of the year, but if having a Happy Christmas depends on celebrating it in the traditional British manner, then it is bound to be illegal!

The reason for this typically British phenomenon is that, in the past, certain Christmas vetoes have been introduced because of special circumstances and have become the law of the land, by virtue of their place in the Statute Book.

If these Acts are not officially repealed, they remain the law, even though the circumstances warranting their origin no longer exist. This is why English law urgently needs the revision the Law Commission has been working on for many years already, and why even reputed lawyers have called our laws "a compost heap of legal absurdities." Too right, chaps!

The crunch is that Christmas Day is a holiday under Common Law, and as such, has accumulated a whole pile of legal flotsam over the centuries, making practically every feature of the Christmas celebrations illegal in some way or another. Are you aware, for instance, that it is against the law to have more than three courses for your Christmas dinner, even in your own home?

The making and eating of mince pies and Christmas pudding on Christmas Day is a contravention of a law passed by Cromwell's Long Parliament. It describes both dishes as "abominable and idolatrous confections to be avoided by Christians" and renders offenders subject to imprisonment and a heavy fine!

The Holy Days and Fasting Days Act (Ref 6 Edw.Viii c.34), 1551, makes it obligatory for everyone to attend a church service on "the Nativitie of our Lorde."

The same law demands that you WALK to church and back. The police are empowered to confiscate any vehicles used for Christmas Day churchgoing, sell them and distribute the proceeds to the poor of the parishes where the confiscations were made!

A later Act (Ref 10/11 Vict. c.89 s.22), 1847, allows the police to alter the route or method of driving any vehicle in the neighbourhood of places of worship during the hours of divine service on Christmas Day.

Business people who accept or give presents could also find themselves on the wrong side of the Act for the Better Prevention of Corruption, 1906. This was passed to stop the practice of large firms giving special Christmas bonuses to customers who traded with them throughout the year. So business representatives and customers alike should be aware that offenders against this Act include "any person who gives or agrees to give or accepts any gift."

Sporting types are hard hit by the legal trappings of the past. The Unlawful Games Act, 1541, allows only archery to be practised anywhere on Christmas Day. At a later date leaping and vaulting were made permissible, so officially these remain the only three sports in which you can legally participate to work up an appetite for the big dinner you should not eat!

Other sportsmen since have made representations to gain Christmas Day recognition for their sports. They have succeeded only in having the general veto underlined by further specific laws. Footballers of both varieties must keep their chasing of the round or oval ball within the confines of their own parish, for an Act (Ref I Chas.I c.I), 1625, states that 'there shall be no meetings, assemblings or concourse of people out of their own parishes for any sport or pastimes whatsoever." This makes spectators as liable to the law as the players!

"This makes spectators as liable to the law as the players!"

Those who frown on ball games may hope to 'bag' their Christmas dinner game by using a sporting gun. This too has been tried before, so another Act (Ref 1/2 Wm. IV c.32 s.3), 1831, was passed stating that "no person whatsoever shall kill or take any game or use any dog, gun, net or other engine or instrument for the purpose of killing or taking any game on Christmas Day."

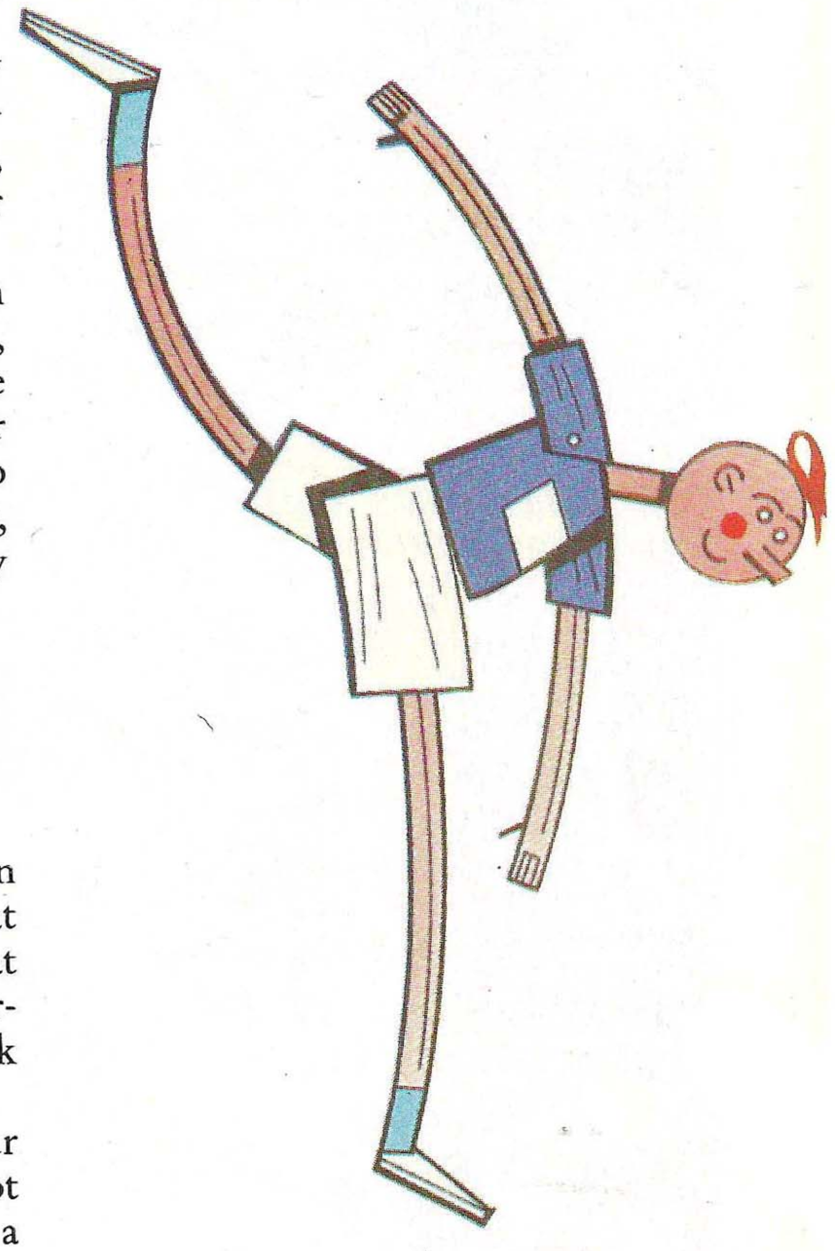
If in doubt as to what is meant by game, the law spells this out too – "hare, pheasant, partridge, grouse, heath or moor game, black game or bustards."

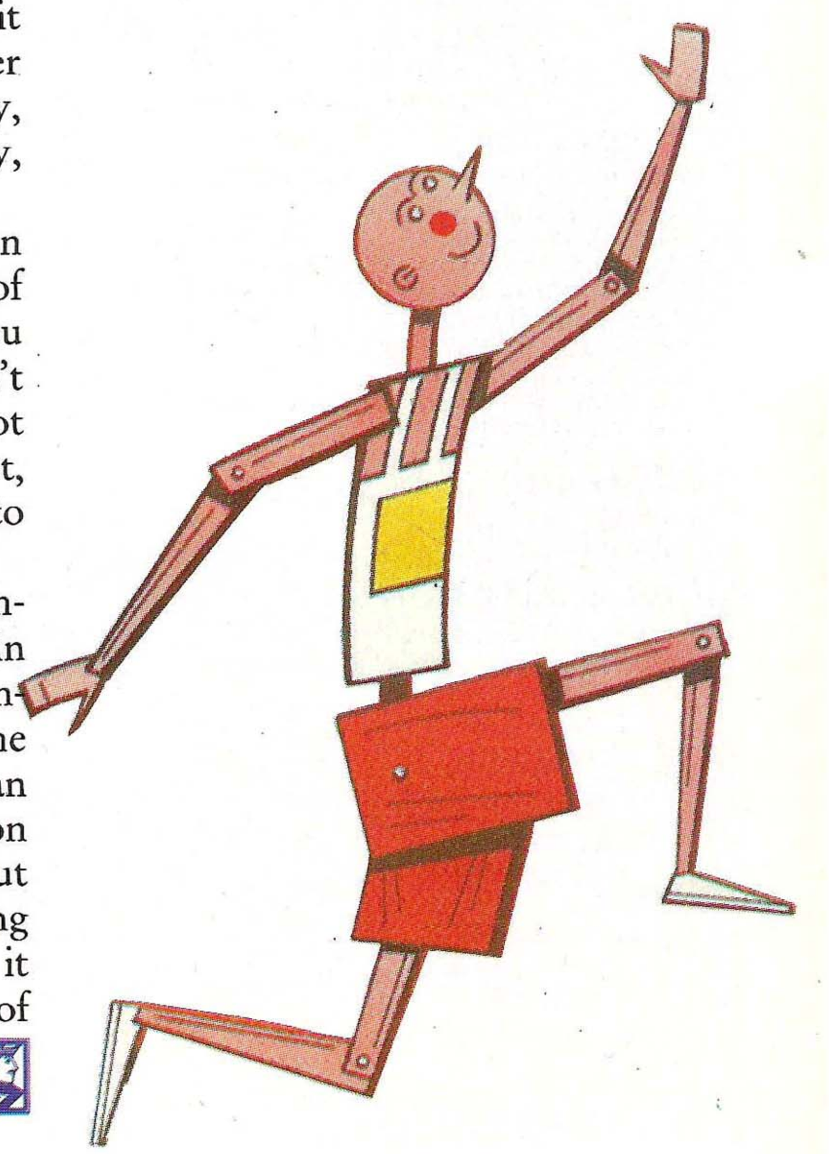
You are not likely to argue with the law passed by Charles II in 1677, stating that on Christmas Day "noe servant, articifer, workman, labourer or other person whatsoever shall do or exercise any worldly labours, business or worke of their ordinary callings." This means that you can work on Christmas Day, but not at your normal job. It also means that all who maintain the essential services, including the police, mark you, are breaking the law!

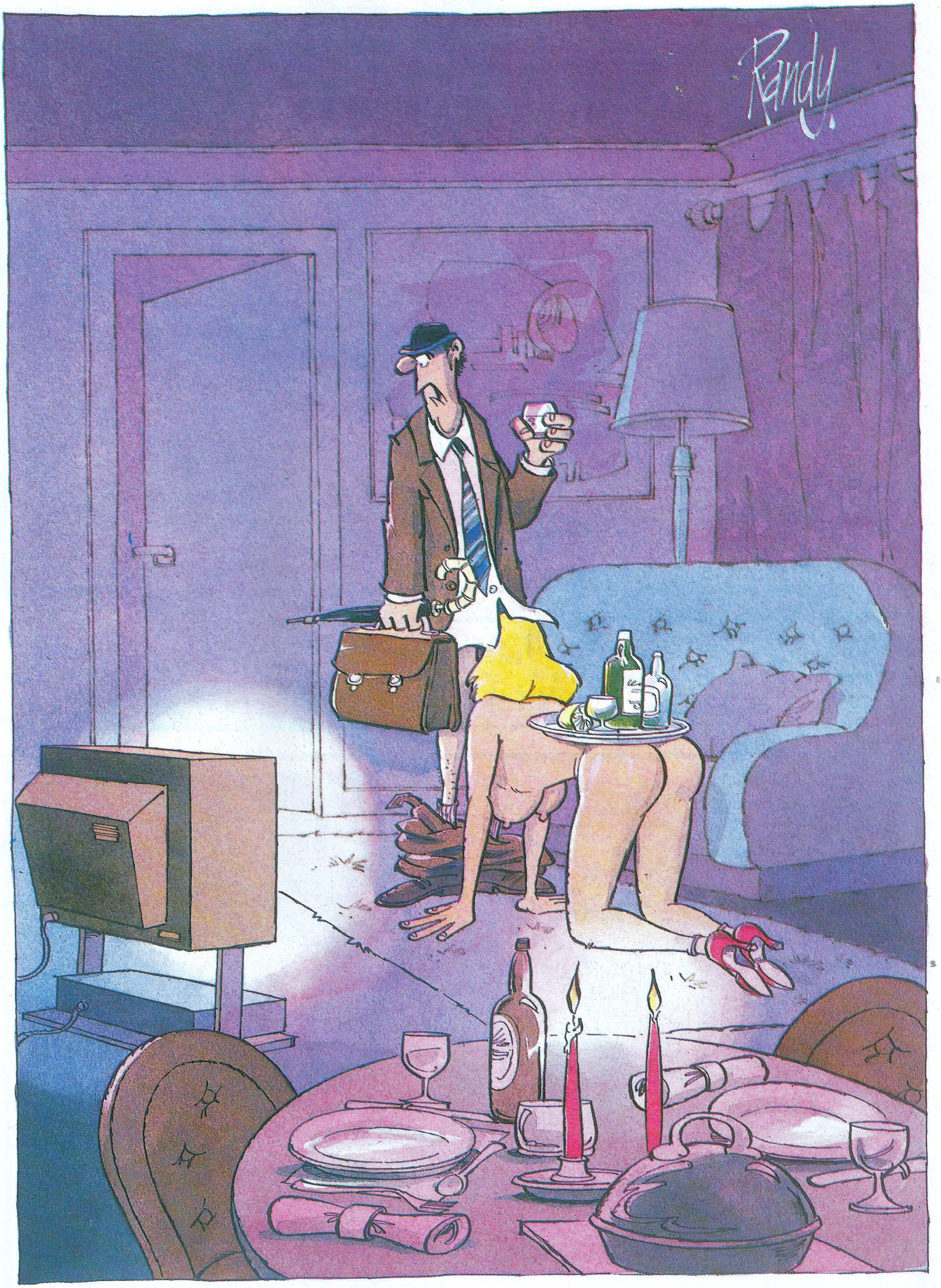
If you have not paid for your Christmas presents, you need not worry about being served with a summons on Christmas Day, as it does not count in the calculation of days for most legal purposes. You cannot be pressed for a time-limit debt which expires on December 25th. You are safe until Boxing Day, which is only a statutory holiday, not one by Common Law.

Finally, the only legal use of a gun on Christmas Day is in defence of the realm or self-defence, so if you have any boring visitors you can't get rid of any other way; don't shoot them unless they threaten you first, and in front of witnesses willing to give evidence on your behalf!

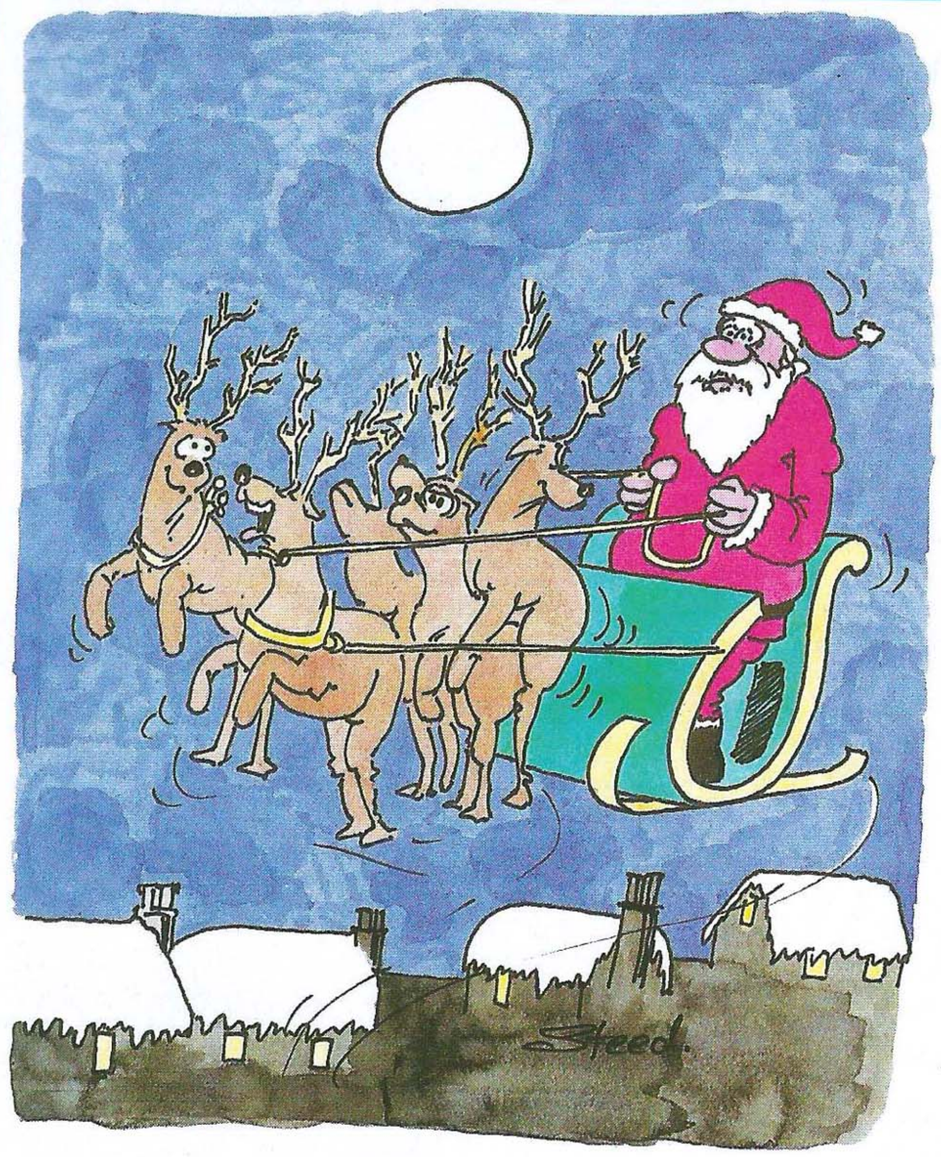
It seems, therefore, that the conviviality of Christmas Day in Britain exists solely due to the police turning a blind eye to the laws of the land. If a conscientious policeman should attempt to arrest you on Christmas Day, you could point out that he too is a lawbreaker by being on duty. On second thoughts, it might not be the best way of enjoying your Happy Illegal Christmas!



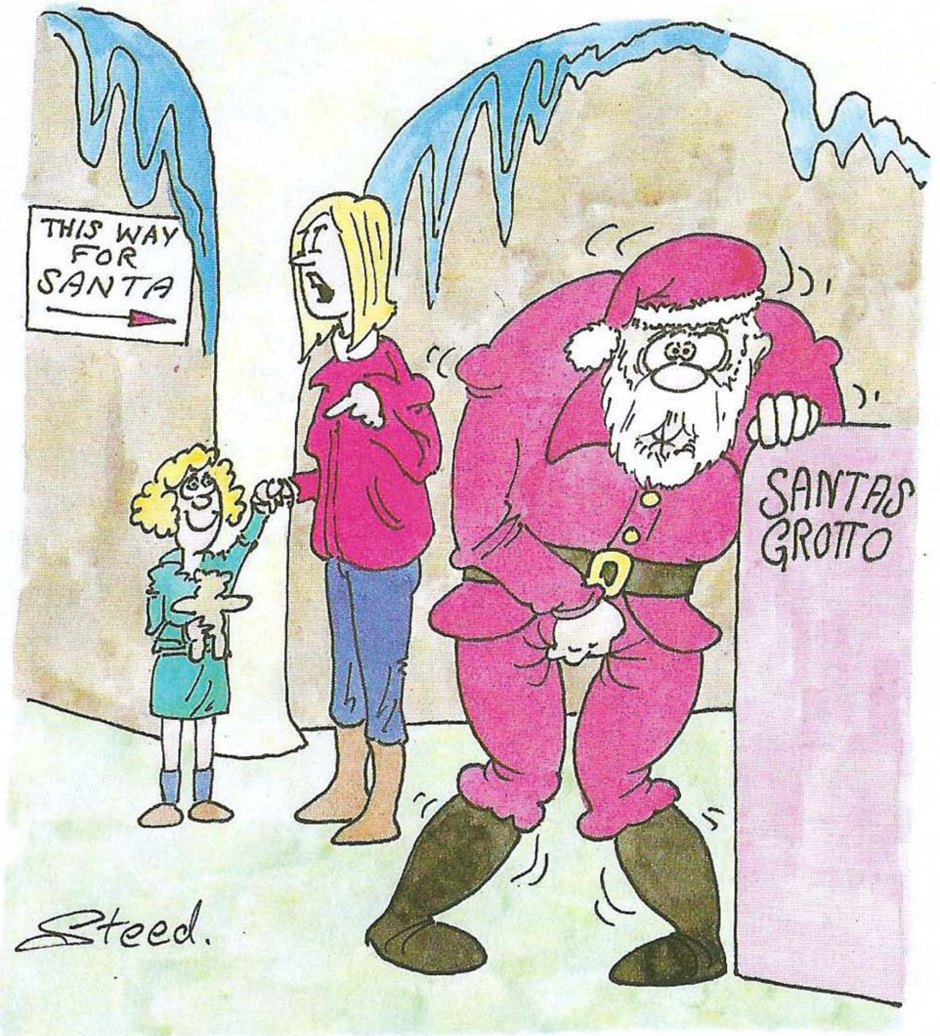




"Good grief, Mavis, it's on the wrong bloody channel again — the cricket's on BBC2!"

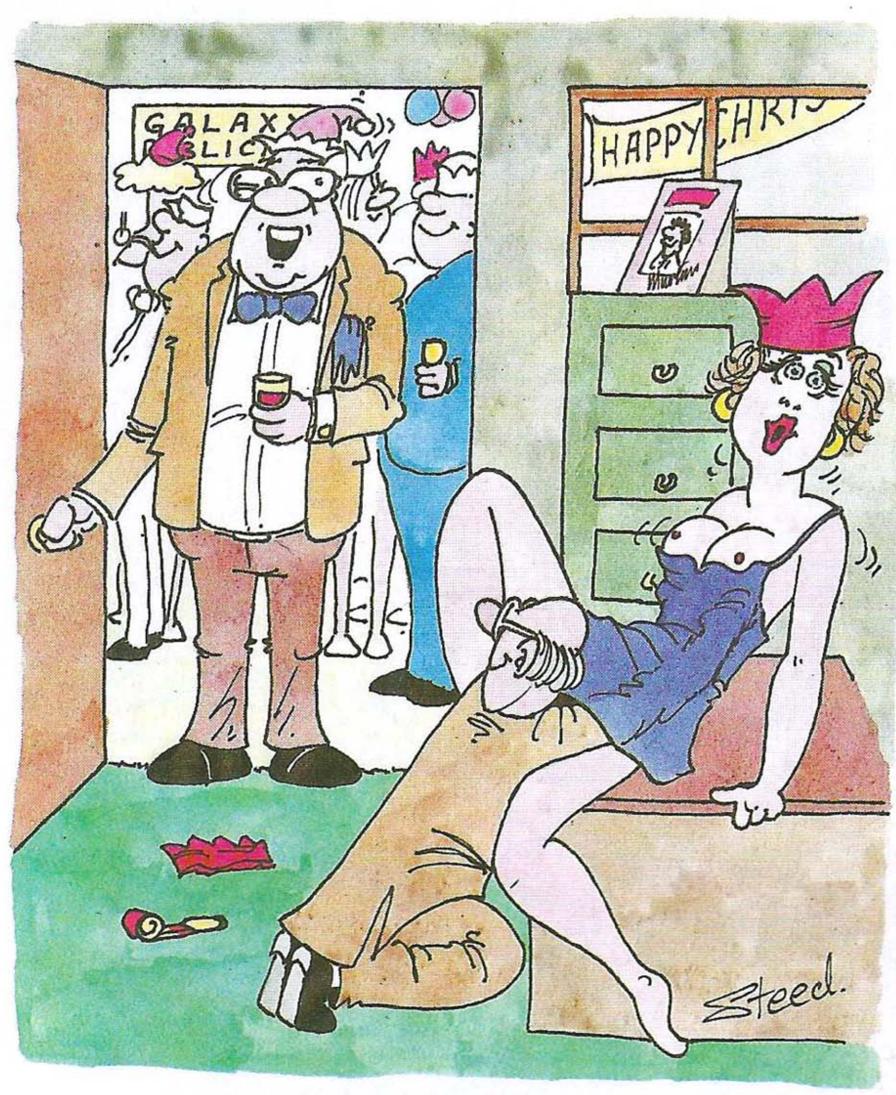


"If you ask me, putting someone called 'Bonker' at the back is just asking for trouble!"

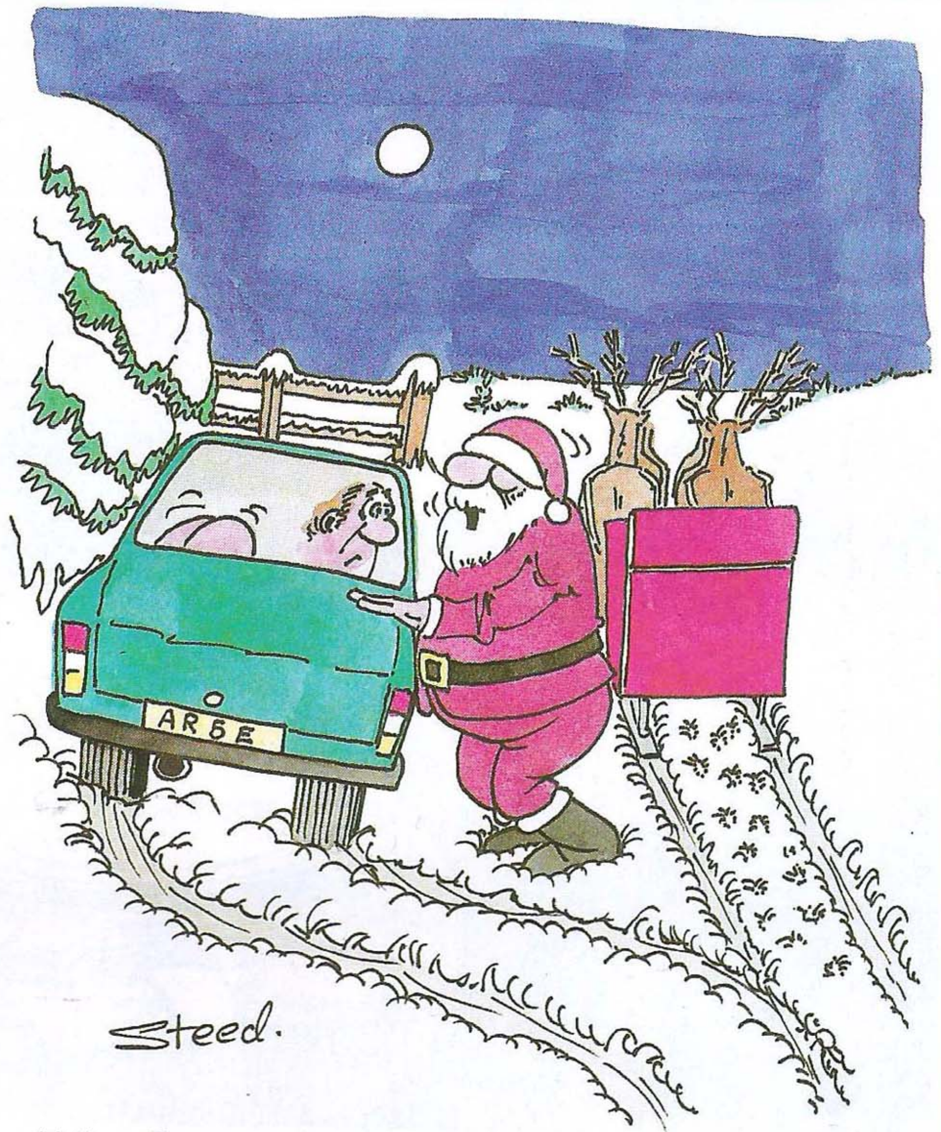

THIS WAY FOR SANTA
SANTAS GROTTO
Steed.

"Just because Santa didn't bring you a bike last year doesn't mean you can bite Santa's balls!"

LAUGH WITH Steed.


HAPPY CHRIS
Steed.

"It's old 'Long Tongue' Johnson — didn't you retire two years ago?"



"Arthur Bloggs — thank goodness I found you! Don't use that year's supply of condoms I brought you, they've all got holes in!"

BONNIE

The lady on the flamingo-pink sofa is called Bonnie, and isn't she just? Bonnie's idea of a good time is bopping away the wee hours in the West End, frantically fending off the advances of those randy young bucks with the designer boxer shorts and traffic-warden-skin personal organisers. Bonnie's not interested in one-night-stands, though — she says she prefers her men to last a little longer.

Anyway, Bonnie's originally from Chepstow, but she's afraid that most of her old school-chums won't recognise her — something about darkening her hair in recent years. Bet they wouldn't have seen her in quite this state of déshabillé before, either!

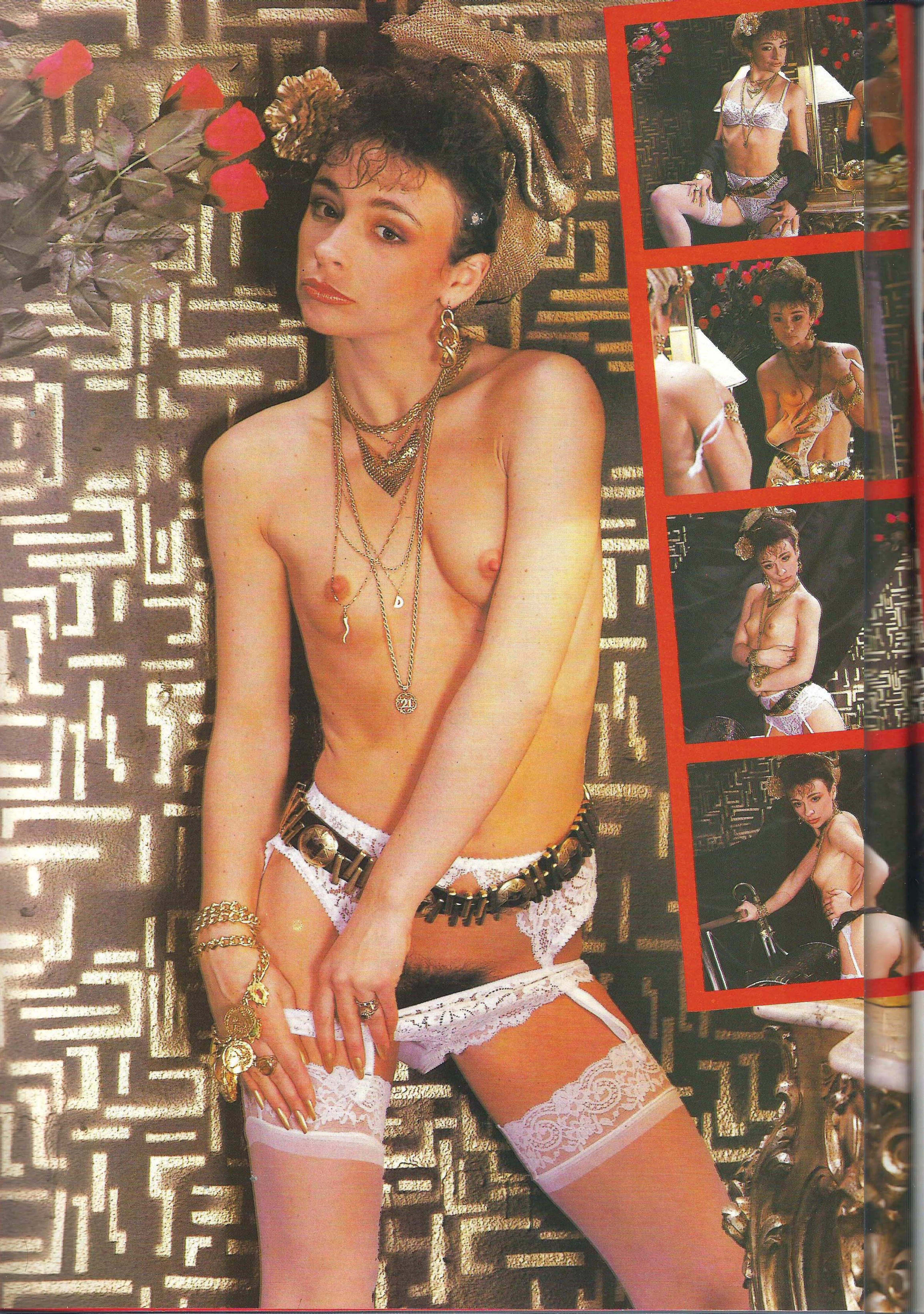
PHOTOGRAPHED BY GLENN B. MORALES

DANIELLE

Danielle's the lass with the unfortunate growth in her ear, but never let it be said that we are biased against people with physical abnormalities. *(You've only got to look at that shower from the Art Dept. to know that! – Ed.)*

Danielle, although blessed with a continental name and the most impressive assets we've seen in a long time, isn't from across the Channel. She comes from Hull, and used to be a nurse. Good – I've got this stiff muscle that needs attending to...

PHOTOGRAPHED BY GERTH SERNELIN



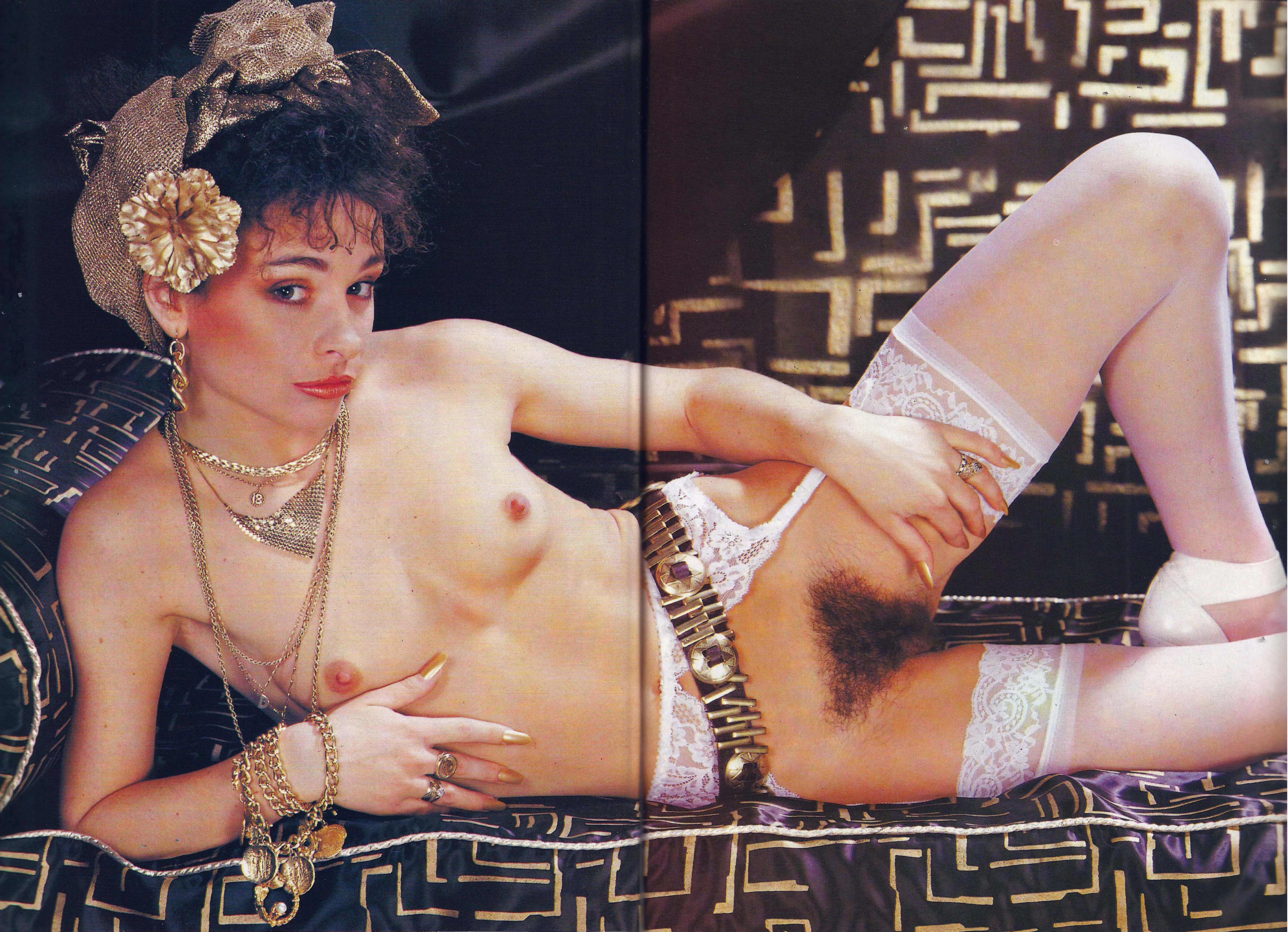
AMATEUR MODEL

A lot of girls do it — how about you? If you want to become one of our Amateur Models, fill in the form at the end of this feature and send us some rude photos of yourself. Polaroids will do, at least two completely nude — front and back view.

SHELLEY PARSONS

A bit classy, this. Here's the lovely Shelley, doing a bit of poetry in motion on a set that must have reduced the *Knave* bank account to a jibbering pile of pennies. Shelley doesn't have the literary bent of her namesake, however — she prefers a more physical lifestyle...

The lass is a sprightly 21-years-old and figures that, if her appearance in these pages leads to a full-time professional career, she's off to live in France. It's enough to make you cry, isn't it?



PHOTOGRAPHED BY JAMES FREEMAN

WANTED GIRLS!

NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY!

Knave is always on the look out for likely lasses for our Amateur Model of the Month feature! As long as they have not previously appeared in Knave, Fiesta or any other men's magazine, girls are eligible for our Amateur Model feature. All we want is three or four nude prints or polaroids, and the completed application form. We choose the girls we like, and invite them to our studio in Essex for a full day's modelling session, with a professional glamour photographer behind the camera and our make-up and hair stylist in attendance to make the girls look their best. We pay our Amateur Models £200 for their day's work at our studio, and we pay £25 to the photographers for sending us their polaroids or prints. A career in glamour modelling could start right here...

MODEL'S NAME ....

ADDRESS ....

....

DAYTIME TEL. NO. ....

DATE OF BIRTH ....

SIGNATURE ....

PHOTOGRAPHER'S NAME ....

ADDRESS ....

....

DAYTIME TEL. NO. ....

DATE PHOTOS TAKEN ....

SIGNATURE ....

TO: KNAVE AMATEUR MODEL FEATURE, PO BOX 312, WITHAM, ESSEX CM8 3SZ.

ROCHELLE

The lady with the faraway look is called Rochelle. *(She's probably wondering whether she's going to get paid! – Ed.)* She's 21 and one of our new-but-not-new-enough-to-be-an-Amateur Model girls. As you can see, we've spared no expense on this set. Three yards of second-hand net curtains, one squeegee bottle and some sticky-backed plastic. "Where's the squeegee bottle?" you ask. Why do you think she's got that faraway look on her face?

When Rochelle left school, she wanted to go into catering, but failed her courses miserably. "To be honest," she says, "I didn't really know one end of a courgette from another!" Rochelle, there are ways and means...

PHOTOGRAPHED BY PAULO TALLARIGO

WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?

Hot from her whistle-stop tour of Middle-Eastern brothels and sexologists conventions, our resident lady of the couch, the highly-respected and over-paid BETTE NOIRE, B.Sex (Hons), M.Sex (Distinction), P.45, continues with her soul-gladdening and wallet-fattening mission to bring sexual fulfillment to the ordinary people. Problems, problems — everyone's got 'em and don't you like to talk about it? Save the sob stories for the ubiquitous Ms. Noire — we're all off down the pub!

Happy holidays, my darlings! Another year and thoughts of sweeping those pine-needles from underneath the rug nestle while you're all tucked up in your beds... Don't forget the silk stockings and sexy underthings and massage oils and toys and erotic videos, and when you're both completely spent and happily exhausted, have a fantasy on me, and to all, a good night... oh, and don't forget to leave a bottle of vintage bubbly in the fireplace for Yours Truly. (Would I could deliver a... er... gift to you individually. Alas, I wouldn't be able to walk straight after I completed London, and besides, my Editor won't pay expenses...)

Q: Is sex actually *good* for you? I mean, it feels terrific, and keeps the species going and all that, but what else does it actually do for you? (S.G. Highgate)

A: Well, it brings a smile to my face, pet, I can tell you! Doesn't it brighten up your existence? Matter of fact, there ***are*** *benefits. Regular, satisfying sex can calm down premenstrual tension and even out the cycle, in a woman, as well as ease her back pain, if that's a side effect. Obviously, since sexual arousal creates tension in the body, orgasm releases it — you* ***do*** *feel a lot more relaxed. (Or hadn't you noticed, when he rolls over and snores afterwards?) — in fact, for a quick release, there's nothing as effective, and it's more fun than a sneeze. It can calm stress, too. (Remember that the next time you "take a meeting!") For a more cosmetic advantage: skin temperature goes up, you perspire, and circulation improves as the blood races around. Sex can make skin look better for all these reasons, when indulged in frequently and happily, a lot of people swear. In addition, the exercise involved in a good bout of lovemaking can't hurt the heart, either (in a healthy specimen) — it's like a bout of aerobics. A good session probably uses up around the same number of calories you'd expend climbing up a few flights of stairs (or more!) Psychologically, the benefits are numerous, one being the fact that it's a great excuse for touching — an enormously strong need that, when satisfied, improves everything from self-confidence to general mental health. Not bad, and the cure's more fun that Dr. John's Snake Oil Tonic.*

Q: Bette, you've said not to overstimulate yourself by rubbing too hard or fast or too often, or you'll desensitise yourself when masturbating. Could you explain a little more about this, because it worries me... Could you also explain what nerve is being stimulated in sex (in the penis?) Can you regain sensitivity once you've lost it? Where can I go for advice? (R.K., London)

A: Down, boy. First of all, as you rightly point out in your letter, a clutched hand feels differently from a soft vagina — and for that reason, make a note: if you're only used to coming with lots of hard hand pressure, you might have more difficulty getting a satisfying climax when you're inside a woman because your penis isn't getting the same degree of stimulation it's been "trained" to respond to — simple? Put another way: if the kinds of stimulation you get from your partner(s) are different from what you do by yourself, you won't always feel as aroused, unless you're familiar with different degrees/kinds of touches, strokes, pressures, etc. You could lose out on terrific sensations that come from more delicate handling. You want to ***expand*** *your bodily awareness, not narrow it down! And if you're really rough with yourself, you could damage what's basically a delicate organ! But you'd have to be pretty damn rough — nerve damage shouldn't worry your pretty head(s) — if you were brutal to yourself, you'd know it! That kind of side-effect's rare, believe me. The prudental nerve, incidentally, is the major sensory nerve root supplying the glans (for both sexes — penis and clitoris), but it's very richly supplied (the glans, I mean) with millions of nerve-endings. So much for anatomy — the chances of your losing a great deal of sensitivity is unlikely. In terms of getting it back, it depends on what's been damaged, to what extent, and how. I mean, a nerve can't be repaired if it's* ***that*** *wrecked, but if it's a temporary loss, you can retrain yourself. You're absolutely fine, for God's sake. If your doctor isn't au fait with sexual difficulties, or you just don't want to talk to him or her, then get a consultant recommended. But don't overreact!*

Q: My problem is — well, I'm not sure I have one. I've masturbated nearly every day since I was 16. (I am now in my mid-forties.) I imagine having sex with all kinds of women, and use all kinds of oils. I love what I do, but I can't help wonder if I'm normal in my frequency. (M.B., Crawley)

A: Stop wondering, highly-sexed Harry. You've just elevated it to an art-form. Everyone has his own needs, and there's a big difference between what's normal and what's the average. If your relations with women, if you have them, aren't being affected, and if you're happy with your sexual response, and you're not doing it to scare the public, then keep on having it off.

Q: The woman in my life has decided to use contraceptive foam, along with a diaphragm, because she wanted to give her body a break from the Pill. But how long is the foam effective for? Is one application enough for several sessions in bed? — E.R., (Chester).

A: Alas, no. The ingredient in foam that makes it powerful gets less effective with time, so you have to reinsert it every time you make love. Sorry about that. You also might want to have your oral fun before you slip in the suds...

Q: Who gets more excited during sex, men or women? — L.F. (Hants).

A: Silly question, silly boy. When it comes to the-er, structure of orgasm, they're pretty much the same. And that's the end of the scientific assessment. There are a million descriptions of climax — that's just in terms of what they are. Add another zillion for how they feel to each one of us. When descriptions were anonymously written down, it wasn't possible to distinguish the sex of the authors. So, the verdict? Six of one, half-a-dozen of the other. (Oh, yes, please!)

Problem? Reasonable questions answered. If unreasonable, they'll either get trashed or passed around for a smirk or a laugh in the office! Write to: What's Your Problem? Knave, P.O. Box 312, Witham, Essex CM8 3SZ.